

No.8

OCTOBER 1973

5p

# libertarian struggle



FOR WORKERS' POWER

## THE CRISIS...



Ireland

USSR

Britain

## THE SOLUTION...

## WORKERS' COUNCILS

### INSIDE: THE GERMAN & SPANISH REVOLUTIONS

paper of the Organisation of Revolutionary Anarchists



## EDITORIAL

# WORKERS' UNITY THE KEY

For all those who mistakenly expected a fighting lead against the Wage Freeze from the TUC conference, the final decisions will come as a grave shock. The message from the bureaucrats is loud and clear - there will be no fight if we can help it. Not only did the TUC studiously avoid any mention of the defeat of workers during Phase Two, but they decided that they would have to do the 'responsible' thing and continue to meet Heath.

Basnett of the GMWU, notorious for his sell-out of the gasworkers earlier this year unashamedly put the line that since there was likely to be an election fairly soon - "we must not, in a petulant fashion, embarrass ourselves, we must embarrass the government" - in other words, keep chatting with Heath, sell the workers down the river, and vote Labour next time. This "respectable" front has to be maintained despite the fact that everybody at the TUC knows the talks will break down. Quite clearly, the trade union leaders are giving the Heath government a breathing space to prepare for the inevitable confrontation this autumn or winter, a bit more time to sell their package deal - a deal which can only mean a further vicious attack on working class living standards.

Nevertheless, if the bureaucrats aren't worried about Phase Three, rank and file trade unionists are. As the cut into real wages accelerates with price rises being announced every day, bank and mortgage

rates going through the roof and further council house rent rises this month, workers have no choice but to fight back.

Heath is in a vulnerable position. He is facing a vast explosion of working class resentment and anger against the freeze. Electricians, railwaymen, public service employees and, in particular, the engineers and the miners have lodged freeze-busting claims but militants must face up to the fact that the major activity of the bureaucracy will consist of limiting, inhibiting, and attempting to defuse the situation. The only guarantee of success is unity of all workers in struggle against the freeze. A militant, united movement of rank and file trade unionists to fight against the government and, where necessary, the trade union bureaucrats is an absolute necessity. This movement must be organised at both a national and local level to co-ordinate activity and launch concerted action against the government and the forces of repression.

This coming battle will lead to calls for a General Strike to unify the struggles. This is necessary, since isolated struggles against a united enemy can only lead to defeats. But there are great dangers in a General Strike.

The General Strike poses the question of workers' power. The 1926 General Strike failed because the class-co laborators on the TUC General Council realised this and opted for defeat rather than shatter the capitalist system. A General Strike led by

the present General Council, limited to demands for piecemeal reforms (ie. repeal of I.R. Act, for a wage rise or against a cut or even for a Labour government) is certain to be defeated unless it outgrows those demands and its leadership.

Preparing for this is the most urgent task at the moment. This must be done by the organisation of rank and file bodies within the unions and the creation of efficient links between them.

## THE BOMBINGS

Those responsible for the present wave of bombings in Britain are consciously or unconsciously acting in the interests of the British ruling class. Neither wing of the IRA has claimed responsibility, yet it is clear that at least a section of the Provisionals acted independently caused some of the attacks. It is also clear that the Special Branch or its agents have planted bombs.

A bombing campaign of this type in Britain is politically disastrous for the Republican movement. Its military value is non-existent, and as a propaganda exercise its effect will be to increase British working class support for more repression in Ireland. This is precisely why the State secret police have been active in adding to the number of bombings. The Littlejohn affair

and the Dublin car bombings show that the ruling class has no qualms about who it kills and maims so long as its policies are furthered.

It also provides the Tories with the excuse they need to "crack-down" on Republicans and sympathisers in this country. Already the right wing Press and reactionary MPs are screaming for the banning of the Republican and left-wing organisations. The State will not hesitate to frame anybody for these bombings to keep the hysteria going and show that the forces of 'law and order' are on the ball. It creates the right atmosphere for the introduction of further repressive legislation aimed at the working class movement in this country. In their own interests British socialists and trade unionists must demand:-

RELEASE IRISH POLITICAL PRISONERS

END INTERNMENT NOW

BRITISH TROOPS OUT OF IRELAND

MANCHESTER ORA. & LANCASTER ORA.

## ENGINEERS' CLAIM

### MILITANT ACTION IS NOW VITAL

The fight for a living wage continues. The AUEW have put in a claim for a £10 increase in basic rates - £35 for 35 hours. There must be no backing down on this demand. The Trade Union bureaucracy have allowed Phase 2 of the Tory wage freeze to bite into the standards of living of working people. They are quite prepared to accept Phase 3, unless the rank and file force their hand.

Scanlon's 'left' face is a fraud. Under his direction the last engineers' dispute was allowed to degenerate into a localised, disunited and fragmented campaign, which gave the engineering workers few concrete gains. The lessons of the last dispute must be well learned - no repetition of this fiasco. In this situation, isolated local strikes can win little.

The AUEW bureaucracy is attempting to keep its options open. They demand a reply to the claim this month or they will "consider" industrial action. This could mean anything: overtime bans, selective strikes, work to rule - in other words, a recipe for yet another defeat of the engineering workers.

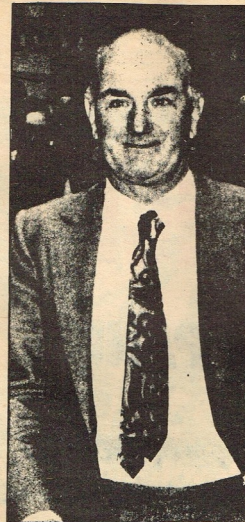
Scanlon cannot be trusted: witness the situation at Chrysler, where the AUEW instructed members to work with blackleg labour, scabbing in the electricians' dispute.

We demand the full claim, £15 for 35 hours. Extra holidays and better holiday pay. Equal pay for women. Immediate national strike action if either the bosses or the government refuse the claim. Rank and file engineers must organise united action with miners and all other workers in dispute. The bureaucrats let them win Phase 2. The rank and file must smash Phase 3.

35 for 35 now

United front of all workers in dispute

Smash the wage freeze



SCANLON

Led the engineers to defeat last year

## LIBERAL REVIVAL ?

At a time of growing demands among the middle classes for law and order, it may seem surprising that there is an increased vote for the Liberal Party, the traditional 'moderate' party in British politics. The recent successes in by-elections and opinion polls - together with Dick Tavame's victory as a 'democratic' Labour candidate at the Lincoln by-election - have led many newspaper editors to talk of the emergence of a powerful 'centre' grouping to moderate the 'extremities' of Labour and Tory politics.

Not that Liberal leaders are anything more than unashamed capitalists who know which side they are on in the struggle between bosses and workers. Jeremy Thorpe is involved in an extortionate second mortgage racket in London, conflicting with the howls of Liberal outrage against Heath for allowing mortgage rates to rise. Clement Freud is a director of the Hugh Hefner 'Playboy' Club, so he should know all about the equal status of women approved by Liberals. Clearly, in spite of all their talk about protecting the little man from the vast inhuman bureaucracies of trade unions and monopolies, they are no alternative to the Tories. They voted for the Industrial Relations Act, and support a permanent prices and incomes policy (which everyone knows means a wage freeze), support the Housing Finance Act, and are in favour of entry into that monopolists' paradise, the Common Market.

However, despite appearances, the Liberal Party is not important. There has been no upsurge of liberalism in this country. The middle classes are prepared to vote for anybody who is not styled 'Conservative' or 'Labour'. It is not the Liberal Party, but the Liberal vote, which is important. The Tory party is rapidly losing the main body of its supporters - the lower middle class. They detest Heath's entry into the Common Market, are hurt by inflation which wipes out their savings, and are disgusted by his soft policy towards the unions. He is not

seen as a 'real' Tory, but as some sort of 'socialist'.

The opposition to Heath is expressed in support for Powell and extreme right wing groups like the National Front, and by the protest vote for the Liberals, which is mainly middle class. This vote represents a highly volatile force, which under certain conditions (like intensified class war, a crumbling economy, and growing inflation) could easily turn to the extreme right. It is a potentially fascist vote. It is almost certain that Britain is going to enter such conditions, and revolutionaries must realise that there is a real possibility of a large fascist movement, based on the middle classes and backward sections of workers, rising in this country in the next few years.

## PRESS FUND

HELP 'LIBERTARIAN STRUGGLE' TO GROW.

- criticise and suggest ways to improve the paper.
- write for the paper.
- sell the paper.
- give a donation to the Press Fund.

All donations will be acknowledged. Cheques and POs should be made out to 'ORA General Fund' Send to Press Fund, 29 Cardigan Rd, Leeds 6.



# DEFEND THE BLACKBURN 3!

On May 23rd this year, three prominent members of the Republican movement in Blackburn were arrested by members of the CID and Special Branch - Britain's political police.

Sean Colley, Patrick John McCabe, and Michael Kneafsey were arraigned on Section 1 Commital Proceedings under Section 1 of the Public Order Act, that "on days unknown between 1st January and 22nd May, they conspired with others unknown to damage and destroy buildings unknown contrary to common law." Kneafsey was also charged under the Public Order Act 1936 that between 1st March and 13th April he was intelligence officer in charge of the Lancashire unit of the IRA.

Before being sent to the notorious Risley Remand Centre, the three prisoners were detained at Great Harwood Police Station, near Blackburn and were subjected to various forms of torture. One of them was covered in cigarette burns, another was badly beaten up. Michael Kneafsey should have had an operation on his hip shortly after he was arrested - instead of this the police made him stand up for long periods, causing acute pain. At Risley there is no adequate medical treatment for him and of course he still awaits the operation.

The committal proceedings took place at Blackburn Magistrates Court on Wednesday 25th July. The Blackburn Three Prisoners Aid Ctee composed of Republican and socialist groups, organised a token picket of the court. The atmosphere of hysteria resembled that prevailing at present in Winchester where the Belfast 10 are being tried. Armed Branch men surrounded the court and the local yellow press managed to mis-quote and mis-represent practically everything it interviewed on the picket.

All three were committed for trial at Preston Crown Court, which will in fact take place in Lancaster as Her Majesty's Judges don't care for their lodgings in Preston. The trial should begin towards the end of October. The evidence revolves around a saucepan, candles, plastic trough, a map of Preston, and a wiring diagram. This odd selection is alleged to suggest the manufacture of explosives.

The trial should last a fortnight, and a mass picket will be mounted on the court every day. Also a march will be held during the course of the trial, which it is hoped will draw national support.

The arrest of the three in Blackburn is not an isolated incident. Seven arrests have been made in Coventry, three in Luton, others in Birmingham and Northampton. Houses and offices of socialist groups sympathetic to the Irish struggle have been raided and people harassed. The ruling class hope to create a climate of fear and of repression which will intimidate people away from the solidarity movement in Britain. Any movement to withdraw British troops from Ireland they want to quickly nip in the bud. One weapon of the ruling class is the court system. They know they can get who they want on what they want - the case of Noel Jenkinson getting 30 years on hearsay evidence for the Aldershot explosion shows this, as well as the case of the Stoke Newington group. The struggle won't be won by clever lawyers and the weight of evidence - the dice is always loaded against revolutionaries. The surest way to release political prisoners is by launching a massive campaign of the sort that freed the dockers imprisoned in Pentonville.

British imperialism has not the slightest interest in "justice" - it uses the courts, police, and army to prop up its rule, and those who challenge it get the justice of being murdered and tortured, as well as being locked up without a trial at all if you're Irish. It is only a matter of time before British workers get their first sniff of CS gas.

All members of the revolutionary movement should demand the immediate and unconditional release of political prisoners in Britain and in Ireland. Try to join the picket in Lancaster during the trial. If you can't send messages of support and donations.

**Blackburn PAC**  
c/o 22 Richmond Crescent,  
Lancaster,  
Blackburn.

Blackburn 3 defence committees have now been set up in Liverpool, Bolton, Manchester and Lancaster.

## RELEASE OUR COMRADE

When a young German Estonian escaped into Finland, and there was a suggestion (which turned out to be false) that the Finnish govt. would hand him back to the Russians, there was a demand by many people, including Terry MP Atrey Neave, that the Fins should "stand up to the Russians", and not hand the man back to tyranny. Excellent sentiments. But when pressed, Mr Neave was not prepared to stand up to the party whip in a similar case.

The suggestion was made by a Spaniard that if he felt that way - and he agreed with his view on the matter entirely - he should see that Andre Martinez, now in Pentonville Prison, is not handed back to General Franco.

Protests made by the Anarchist Black Cross and relayed through Amnesty and other organisations have halted the deportation of Martinez. He is a young Spaniard who objected to doing his military service and came to England to study. Whilst in Spain he also formed "illegal associations" which would make a prison sentence certain if he went back i.e. he mixed in libertarian circles. He got permission to work in England, and did so.

After two years in the country without complaint - though he had tried to organise catering workers, which is something not particularly welcome - he decided to go to Sweden. He could not get in through a technicality (now overcome) and was sent back. The Home Office which could not find any reason to deport him before, now would not let him in. But as he was in, they decided to send him to Spain. He was held in jail. He has been there for over six

months now because the Home Office have halted the deportation to Spain.

The Labour Party became interested in the case. But they did not want to do anything until Martinez was deported to Spain as a conscientious objector - that they would do something that would make the Tories sit up. Other than as a political pawn, they did not want to know about Martinez (any more than the Tories cared the Estonian other than as a stick to beat the Russians).

Meanwhile he stays in jail...the Swedes will let him in but the Home Office will not let him go unless the Swedes also give firm guarantee he will not come back. No western govt. can give such guarantees unless they intend to put a man in jail (Franco will be happy to oblige).

Andres remains in jail - dependent for his wants on friends from outside - unable to leave the country except to Spain - with permission to go to Sweden - knowing that had he only gone two weeks later than he did go, all would have been well.

He is not the only prisoner in Pentonville who has been jailed because of Home Office bureaucracy. Quite apart from the would-be immigrants who come in with the intention to settle - now a criminal offence - there are dozens of people from all over the world, who have inadvertently filled up the wrong form, or allowed an official document to get out of date. They can be there for weeks...even months...and it might be years.



MANCHESTER DEMONSTRATION CALLS FOR BRITISH TROOPS OUT - END INTERNMENT NOW

# sub- scribe



Subscription £1 for 12 issues

NAME

ADDRESS

Make out POs/Cheques to 'ORA',  
29, Cardigan Road Leeds 6.

## ORA Publication

Tyranny of Structurelessness by Jo Freeman  
Obtainable from Leeds Womens ORA, 29  
Cardigan Road, Leeds 6. 5p. plus 3p. post.  
'Libertarians in all movements should study  
this pamphlet' because it contains the core of  
the argument that ORGANISED libertarians  
have stated. review in April L.S.

## PUBLIC MEETINGS AND EVENTS

MANCHESTER PROP DEMONSTRATION -  
Against the degrading conditions of  
prisoners and their wives, and the lack of jobs  
for ex-prisoners.  
Saturday 20th October. Meet 1.30pm. Crown  
Square, Manchester. March through City centre  
to Strongways.

MANCHESTER AREA REVOLUTIONARY  
ANARCHISTS  
Fortnightly public meetings  
Thursdays, 8.00 p.m.  
Less O'Gowrie, Charles Street

GLASGOW ORA meet wednesdays 8pm  
at the Iona Community, 144 Clyde St.

## LIBERTARIAN STUDENTS' FEDERATION?

Anyone interested in "a Student Fed-  
eration within ORA, mainly those in-  
volved in Union work" ?  
Write to Larry Law, Berks Coll. of Ed.  
Students' Union, Bulmershe Court,  
Woodlands Avenue, Earley, Reading,  
Berkshire. READING 666596.

## ORA groups & contact addresses

If you think that the direct control by working people over all aspects of their lives is worth fighting for...

If you think that what's needed now is independent rank and file organisation linking all aspects of working class struggle - in housing, schools, womens' rights, in work, and all others.

If you think that the independence of these organisations must be defended from takeover by the Labour traitors, union bureaucracies, and the 'NEW leaderships' If you think that an organisation is needed which fights for revolutionary politics in everyday struggles but has no intention of seizing power for itself.

THEN, JOIN THE ORA!

### LOCAL GROUPS.

Glasgow: Gordon Sykes, 52 Queen Elisabeth  
Square, Glasgow C3. Manchester: Ron Marsden, 277 Kingsway Park  
Davyhulme, Urmston, Mfc

Hull: Marion McCartney, 15 Colman Street,  
Hull. North London: Doug Durrant, 68a Chingford  
Road, London E 17

Lancaster: Joe Lhorneberry, 56 Norfolk St. York: Neil Hunt, 24 Moss Street, York.

Leeds: Trevor Baragoe, flat 3, 35 Richmond  
Road, Leeds 6

There are also contacts in Birmingham, Colchester, Dundee, Edinburgh, Harlech,  
Liverpool, West, East and South London, Norwich, Oxford, Poole, Reading, and  
Swansea. If you want to be put in touch, write to the North London group.



# HOMELESSNESS: IS SQUATTING THE ANSWER?

Squatting, in Britain, has gone through three distinct phases since the Second World War.

In the immediate post-war era (1945-7), it arose as a more-or-less spontaneous response to a chronic housing shortage and usually took the form of occupations of disused military camps. The reasons for the shortage are not hard to find. Large numbers of servicemen recently demobilised, trying to settle down and set up homes, finding a housing supply reduced by bombing and a building industry stagnant after six years of war.

But lacking any strong political self-awareness, the movement drifted into reformism and control by the Communist Party. Although in many cases the Party hacks made little headway among the squatters themselves, the C.P. was able to present itself without fear of contradiction, as the squatters' Champion, since the squatters did not have their own independent voice.

## AMATEUR SOCIAL WORKERS

Around 1969 a new wave of squatting arose which was far from spontaneous. Rather it was from the start a deliberate campaign, most of whose leading activists were ex-CND, or Committee of 100, or the more recent Vietnam Solidarity Campaign. Their tactics generally were to occupy empty property — and then to move a homeless family in. At best this procedure left the 'activists' playing the role of amateur social workers; at worst it was manipulative politicking at its most cynical. Homeless and desperate families were the pawns in power struggles between the self-styled revolutionaries and local councils.

## SUPERSTARS

Several of these 'revolutionaries' achieved fame as political 'superstars'. 'Anarchists' Ron Bailey and Jim Radford rapidly came to front respectable squatting bodies dedicated to negotiations with local authorities for empty property. Four years of rapid political degeneration has seen these groups taking on the job of collecting rents and, inevitably, of carrying out evictions. Looking back, the direction of this squatting campaign was becoming visible even at the time of the Hippies' occupation at 144 Piccadilly. Bailey and Co. were quick to con-

demn an action which, although carried out by people on the fringe of society, was a far more conscious political act than the advanced liberalism of the 'respectable' groups. Bourgeois press coverage at the time reflected the same distinction. While the 'Family Squatting' groups received on the whole a favourable, or at least non-committal Press, always ready for a sob-story about homelessness and heartless councils / landlords, nothing but hysteria — with vague allegations of foreign anarchist influence, as well as the usual drugs/sex rubbish — on the several 'Hippy' squats.

The end of that year of squatting, with some of its leading ideologists recognising their true vocation as liberal good guys, Bailey eventually joining Shelter, from which he has just been sacked by CIA-stooge Geoff Martin; Radford now working for the Blackfriars Settlement in South London. And a few diehard urban guerrillas — as in Brighton — in jail for allegedly stocking up petrol bombs to drop on the heads of bailiffs, did not mean the end of the conditions which had inspired the campaign.

## SPECULATION

In fact the 'problem' has become significantly worse. Tory government policies encouraging owner-occupation and penalising tenants, both municipal and private, have raised rents beyond the means of many people, even with the (meantest) rebates. Council-house building has been cut back in favour of private development. Meanwhile municipal demolition programmes and speculative developers together are chewing up the remaining areas of old housing (terraces and subdivided detached houses.) which can provide cheap accommodation. They are being replaced by sterile offices, urban motorways, barrack-like new estates for the workers and elegant little flats for the trendy and rich.

Now the bogey of homelessness has become familiar not only to the 'lumpen' (dropouts, run-aways, ex-cons, long-term unemployed, the disabled, etc) but to many lowerpaid workers. Squatting in property being deliberately held empty has returned as a more-or-less spontaneous response; as in 1946, groups of people are taking direct action to put a roof over their heads. Instead of 'revolutionaries' becoming liberal social workers, we've now seen official social workers, demonstrating with squatters, as in Islington not too long ago.

## REVOLUTIONARY ?

But is squatting, even spontaneous squatting revolutionary? It can be, but only if it is linked with other groups in struggle against the same enemy. Tenants, for example, who are still fighting the Unfair Rents Bill. Private tenants, (and owner-occupiers?), in old areas threatened with redevelopment. Rank-and-file groups among the various 'professionals', such as social workers and council officials, with whom squatters will come in contact. And, of course, organised workers: a strong mass picket would deter the most determined bailiffs. Squatting without a policy of making these links, even if successful in the short term, will always be in danger of being co-opted by 'liberal' reforms.

The Italian housing struggles since 1969, documented in 'Take Over the City', (available from Rising Free, 197 Kings Cross Road, London WC1, for 20p.) show some of the possibilities open when mass squatting movements start to link up with tenants in working-class housing areas, (which, as in Britain, include a relatively high proportion of immigrant workers) and with the factories.

In fact the separation between 'workers', 'tenants' and 'squatters' becomes an irrelevant and bourgeois system of labelling, of attempting to divide the autonomous organisations erected by the class in struggle, one struggle. Even then there is no guarantee that the demands made will not be such as to be satisfied by reforms.



EAST END FAMILY SQUATTING

IN ARBOUR SQUARE

# ECONOMIC

The nightmare of the ruling Russian bureaucracy is that Russian workers fighting to maintain their standards of living will strike against the authorities and mount an insurrection — the Soviet bureaucracy will never forget the workers' revolts in East Berlin in 1953, Hungary in 1956 and Gdansk and Gdynia in 1970. Evidence suggests that the Russian ruling class has less and less room for manoeuvre in performing its task of extracting the maximum surplus possible from the Russian workers without provoking major opposition.

Russian growth is quickly slowing down. In 1972 the increase in Gross National Product (GNP) dropped to 4% whilst Gross Domestic Product (GDP) grew by less than 2%. The specific difficulties of the different sectors of the economy are reinforcing each other and are highlighting the trend to stagnation. If nothing is done quickly, the Russian economy will slowly but surely grind to a halt.

Last year's bad harvest, when grain production was about 170m tons as compared to the target of 197m tons, emphasises how backward the agricultural sector really is. This natural disaster precipitated such a grain crisis in both bread and animal fodder that the bureaucracy was forced to dip into its gold reserves to the tune of an estimated \$2,000m. However this bad harvest, although the immediate cause of the cause of the crisis, is not the real cause: the real cause lies in the backwardness of Russian agriculture, after all the targets for grain production have never been reached.

Commentators blinded by the astonishing development of heavy industry under Stalin, have more often than not failed to understand that the corollary of rapid industrialisation was the underdevelopment of agriculture. The point is that industrialisation was based on the exploitation of peasant capital, the extermination of the kulaks (rich peasants) and the herding of the peasants into so-called 'collectives'. The agricultural sector has never really recovered. Though successive politburos have recognised the agricultural problems, the main thrust of Soviet economic policy — arms expenditure and the necessary base of heavy industry — means that investment in agriculture is both inadequate and inefficient.

Russia is years behind the West in the efficiency of her farming. Tractors, harvesters, lorries, and fertilisers are in short supply as are skilled operatives. A large proportion of Russia's population works on the land but it is an ageing work force. The land holds little attraction for the young. Moreover, Russian agriculture still has not recovered from the disasters of the second world war. Inadequate investment also leads to inefficient investment. Even the most comprehensive economic plan cannot succeed if the interdependence of the various parts is not recognised: tractors and

lorries may arrive at collectives but it is useless if there are no spare parts: grandiose plans for developing Russian livestock begin before it is discovered that animal fodder is being produced in insufficient quantities.

After exceptionally good harvests in the next few years may conceal this basic weakness in the agricultural sector. But the unwillingness and, more important, the inability of Brezhnev to make the massive long-term investment in agriculture which is necessary, indicates that the problems are only beginning.

## SOVIET INDUSTRY FAILURE

Soviet industry, too, did poorly last year. Lots of products failed to reach their targets for the year. They included natural gas (3.5% below target), oilfield equipment (15.4%), light industry equipment (11.0%) grain harvesting combines (7.1%), turbines (11.1%), washing machines (15.4%), refrigerators (2.6%), and glass (4.4%). Of course this is partly the result of 1972's special circumstances and the need to divert resources to purchase grain in the West, but more important are the long term trends that these figures illustrate.

Again the problem is one of capital investment — or rather, the lack of investment. The problem of diminishing returns on investment is exacerbated by Brezhnev's decision — in response to pressures from below — to increase the supply of consumer goods which inevitably lead to a diversion of resources from basic industry such as mining, petrochemicals, steelmaking, and heavy engineering. Moreover the Russian worker is nowhere near as productive as his western counterpart — the consequence of low wages and bad conditions is low productivity and sabotage. Matching the tight supply of capital is the equally tight supply of labour.

The level of technological development is also in many sectors extremely backward. A further consideration is that the paranoia and rigidity characteristic of the Russian ruling class is particularly strong in industrial management, where the forces tending towards inertia are tremendous. Managers are so terrified that production targets will go up that they hoard labour and raw materials. An article in the Soviet Builders gazette demonstrates some of the absurdities which result from the concentration on targets and quotas. Russia, it appears, produces twice as much glass as the US though it builds only half as many houses — where does it all go, you might wonder? Well 46% of it gets broken before or during installation. Why? Because the targets for glass production are based in terms of square metres and managers tend to produce thin glass which, of course, breaks easily!



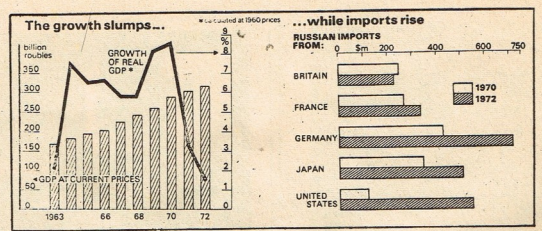
ISLINGTON SOCIAL WORKERS JOIN SQUATTERS IN A TOWN HALL PROTEST.



# CRISIS HITS U.S.S.R.

Brezhnev is quite clearly in an impossible situation, if he is to increase the level of consumer goods, put necessary development capital into agriculture, modernise industry and continue to outlay huge resources to armaments expenditure and heavy industry, given the fact that capital in Russia is in short supply. In the present condition in Russia all these aims have to be fulfilled. Any cutback in consumer goods will anger the Russian workers. Russia can't afford to lurch from grain crisis to grain crisis. To neglect the modernisation of industry would mean that Russia would have to take permanent second place to the US in industrial production and that there would be the danger of being overtaken by Japan. A major reversal in arms expenditure would provoke a bitter wrangle with the leading circles of the bureaucracy and threaten Brezhnev's own position.

Brezhnev seems to have decided that the only way out of this impasse is to import capital and technical expertise from the West. This is the real reason for 'detente'. Russia has its attraction for western monopoly capitalism as the Guardian (16/6/73) comments, "Although



most western businessmen have been turning their thoughts towards the USSR as a source for long term supplies of raw materials and energy, a growing number is also beginning to see the Soviet Union as a potentially valuable source of low cost labour". In other words, a cheap, disciplined, labour force with no nonsense like trade unions, shop stewards or

strikes is what they hope for. Already there have been deals and negotiations with West Germany, Japan, and principally the US. Negotiations with the US over natural gas in Siberia - it is proposed that the US invest \$11,000m and sell gas in the US - are well advanced although it appears that Brezhnev wants to hold out for more.

However, far from solving Russia's economic difficulties, these deals with the west could well bring further, more complex problems for the Soviet bureaucracy. Russia's balance of payments deficit is already in creasing (the deficit of \$700m in 1972 is expected to jump to about \$2000m this year and go even higher in 1974). Any substantial increase in the volume of trade and movements of capital is likely to accelerate this trend. Furthermore, close link with the money markets of the West would mean that Russia's relative immunity to things like international monetary crises and minor recessions in the west would disappear. A factor which is particularly important in the light of the re-emergence of the expansion-recession international trade cycle. Inflation, too, would hit the USSR.

These economic trends are danger signals to the Russian bureaucracy. Cracks are beginning to appear in the monolith that is Russia. Sooner or later the strains of the Soviet economy must lead to an explosion of resentment against the regime. The nightmare of the paranoid Stalinists in the Kremlin could well become reality.



# SOVIET WORKERS FIGHT BACK

In reporting the current wave of opposition to the policies of the bureaucracy in the USSR, the Western press has created the impression that the movement is confined to intellectuals who are demanding nothing more than the civil liberties guaranteed by the 1936 Constitution (the Constitution named after Stalin, the draft of which disappeared during the purges).

This is not so. Not only are more and more workers openly demonstrating their discontent with the rule of the commissars, chekists and apparatchiks (loosely translated as 'organismen'), but in doing so are evolving a critique of Soviet society which can have but one end - revolution.

In the words of an ex-inmate of a labour camp "Russia is more than ever full of revolutionaries".

Over the last four years this revolutionary tendency amongst the working class has manifested itself in increasingly militant strikes and demonstrations.

Workers at the Kiev hydro-electric station held a meeting to protest bad housing, not only did they draft a letter to the Central Committee of the Communist Party, but also held a demonstration with banners demanding "All power to

the Soviets" (in 1917 this was the slogan of the Bolsheviks, however, what they meant was all power to the Party - thus beginning a process of substitution which ended in Stalin's dictatorship). The demonstration was attacked by the KGB (secret police).

The Kiev workers sent a delegation, headed by a pensioner, Ivan Hryshchuk, to Moscow to present their letter with 600 signatures to the bureaucracy. Hryshchuk was arrested and is still in jail.

Earlier, three young workers had been sent to a strict regime camp for distributing leaflets calling for opposition to russification (ie banning the native Ukrainian language and courses dealing with local history and culture and replacing them with Russian courses) at the Shevchenko University.

In Kaunas, Lithuania's second largest city, thousands fought the KGB and Red Army troops for two days after a young man had burnt himself to death as a political protest. Over 200 are currently in prison awaiting trial.

In Dnipropetrovsk thousands struck in support of demands for improved living conditions. The strikers marched on the local CP office where the police opened fire on them.

Over 10,000 workers in Dniprodzerzhinsk, in the Ukraine, rioted for two days destroying the offices of the KGB and the Komsomol (Young Communist League). The police opened fire, killing 7 and wounding 80. Mass arrests were made.

4,000 copies of a leaflet, published by the clandestine Citizen's Committee, were distributed in Moscow. The leaflet pointed out that the promises made at the 22nd Congress in 1961 had not been fulfilled. Denouncing the privileged and luxurious life of the bureaucrats, it drew attention to the low standard of living of the working class and their lack of democratic rights.

Describing the USSR as state-capitalist (so much for the Trotskyists myth of the workers' state) it stated: "Socialism doesn't exist in our country! It is not socialism, when there are within the country 20 times more parasites and chiefs than there were in Czarist Russia. It is not socialism when the average wage of a worker is 100 rubles, while the income of prominent leaders is several thousand per month".

Citing the examples of strikes in Leningrad, Moscow, Temir-Ta, Cherkik, Novocherkassk, and in Poland, the leaflet called on the workers to fight for their rights, for, "only through struggle can we make changes for the better".

Even in the labour camps there have been strikes and demonstrations. In one camp prisoners flew the Anarchist Black Flag over their huts for three days. (The Russian Anarchists were the first victims of the Bolshevik Cheka; after World War 2 Stalinism waged a bloody war of repression against the Anarchists of Bulgaria). The reaction of the bureaucracy to such strikes has been to shoot down the strikers on the spot or to condemn them to death after trial. Workers have been imprisoned for helping camp inmates.

In the official press appear echoes of the workers' discontent. In the journal *Party Life* a worker wrote: "We work overtime, lose our rest day, expend unnecessary labour, time and nervous energy, and men guilty of all this get prizes for fulfilling the programme". In *Leninskoye Znaniya* a carpenter complained of being forced to work 18 hours a day for two weeks.

These events like the East German rising of 1953, the Hungarian Revolution of 1956, the Czechoslovak Spring, the Polish riots and the Yugoslav demonstrations show that the class struggle in the Soviet bloc is as bitter and hard fought as in the west, for in industrialising these once backward areas the bureaucracy has created its own grave-digger - the working class.



## special feature

# Workers'

## GERMANY 1918

With the growing interest in workers' control over the last few years, many militants are looking back in history to times when workers took over their factories and set up councils to govern society in their own interests instead of the interests of the bosses. This is a far cry from the mild suggestion of worker participation with the bosses or (in the case of nationalised industries) with the State's representatives.

One such revolution which has usually been obscured until recently took place in Germany in November 1918 and much can be learned by examining it.

Before the 1st World War the German working class was the most powerful and well-organised in Europe, and the Social Democratic Party, the SPD, was the strongest party in the Second International. But while its leaders were full of empty chatter about class war, the party was committed to a reformist, non-revolutionary practice. A sterile party bureaucracy had grown up, living off the party and unconcerned about socialism. The leader of the SPD right wing, Bernstein (similar to Roy Jenkins) actually said that the party was everything and socialism nothing. Unlike the Labour Party, however, the SPD contained a significant revolutionary wing led by Rosa Luxemburg and Karl Liebknecht, who argued that the party should be revolutionary in practice as well as theory.

However, all the Social Democrats were committed to parliamentary democracy, and even the revolutionaries in the party did not realise that a socialist society would need new, more democratic institutions. The appearance of workers and peasants councils (soviets) in Russia in the 1905 rebellion should have shown the revolutionaries that they must argue and agitate against the fake democracy of a parliament where a few rule with the occasional consent of 'the people'. It should also have convinced them that it was necessary to break completely with the reformist SPD. Instead they continued with the vain hope of changing the SPD's policies, and allowed the illusions in Parliament, that many workers held, to continue unchallenged.

The First World War showed the consequences of this. The majority of the SPD supported the war completely and (like the Labour Party in Britain) their leaders went on recruiting platoons to urge workers to kill British and French

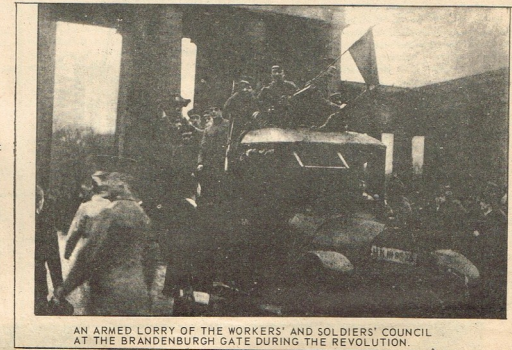
workers and be killed themselves in the interest of the ruling class. Some Social Democrats, appalled by the butchery of the trenches, finally broke with the SPD to form an Independent SPD under Kautsky (similar to Michael Foot in the British Labour Party) and called for a negotiated peace - an abstract view laying the fate of the working class in the hands of the beneficial ruling class at that moment slaughtering millions of workers in the interests of their profits. Only a small group around Rosa Luxemburg - the Spartacists - argued for a realistic solution - the revolutionary overthrow of the ruling class by the workers. The Spartacists were still committed to fighting for parliament rather than the direct democracy of a society run by workers councils until near the end of the war. The complete lack of agitation and propaganda for council communism among the working class was soon to be seen.

### THE REVOLUTION

In November 1918 the working class took matters into their own hands. A naval mutiny at Kiel led to the seizure of power in the cities and towns of Germany.

Workers and Soldiers set up councils to run the area and called for the end of the war and the setting up of a Republic. On November 9, a general strike led by revolutionary shop stewards paralysed Berlin and thousands of workers marched through the capital, occupying public buildings. Many were armed, and the sight of the red flags frightened the SPD leaders as much as it did the ruling class. Prince Max of Baden, the Chancellor (Prime Minister) said: "To combat the revolution we must conjure up the democratic idea" (or parliament) and appointed the SPD leader Ebert as Chancellor. Ebert said: "I hate revolution like social sin". The SPD then proclaimed a Republic to forestall the revolutionaries.

The power of the State was non-existent however. Germany was in practice ruled by workers and soldiers councils, the result of a spontaneous mass movement. However, it was only the beginning of a revolution. To be successful, there had to be a complete break with the reformist SPD (just as there must be a complete break with the Labour Party in Britain). The councils had to turn into permanent institutions - a democratic substitute for the ill-



ions of parliament - and take over industry from the capitalists. If this did not happen, then the revolution would be defeated and capitalism and the ruling class would recover.

The majority of workers, still holding to the illusions of parliamentary reformism failed to carry the revolution through to its logical conclusion. They saw the councils as effective instruments for obtaining peace, without realising that only socialist revolution could guarantee lasting peace. The councils were dominated by the SPD, who were hostile to them, and wanted to reverse the revolution. The SPD took part in the councils to bring the mass movement under their control. No attempt was made to smash the Civil Service. No attempt was made to replace the army with a democratic militia. No attempt was made to take over the factories. In many areas, councils tried to introduce the eight-hour day - good enough in itself in ordinary circumstances but pathetic in a revolutionary situation. Only the workers councils in Saxony called for the 'taking over of production' by the working class, abolition of unearned income, arming of the people to safeguard the revolution, and abolition of the existing courts of law. The election of a new Saxon workers council which followed, elected a majority of SPD deputies who immediately became much more 'moderate'.

The day after the revolution succeeded on November 10 the Berlin Workers and Soldiers Council met and agreed to the formation of a cabinet under Ebert, composed of SPD and Independent SPD members. Liebknecht's call to break with the SPD met with a cold reception. It was seen as breaking workers unity. But Liebknecht was right. Ebert was unconcerned with workers unity. His policy was to divide the working class, and was to lead to workers turning machine guns on other workers. Workers unity in such a situation is always revolutionary unity and a total break with the policy of Ebert's and their politics. That very day Ebert was negotiating with General Groener, the head of the Imperial Army, with the intention of crushing the revolution.

This is not simply a matter of Ebert being a scoundrel. As with Ramsey MacDonald's decision to split with the British Labour Party in 1931, it was not a question of making mistakes or of picking the wrong men to lead. The decision arose from Ebert's politics. His belief in 'the national interest' and his fear of a mass movement led directly to policies of repression. In exactly the same way Reg Prentice, Shadow Minister of Labour, attacked workers who came out on strike to release the five dockers imprisoned by the Industrial Relations Court last summer. He called on the workers to obey the law rather than go on a political strike. His position was the result of his politics - the politics of the Labour Party.

Ebert now devoted himself to destroying the revolution. He set up 'commissions' to 'study

the question of nationalisation, and when the moderate commissions finally reported, they were, predictably, in favour of capitalism. Spartacist demonstrations were broken with force, and at one demonstration troops machine-gunned the crowd, killing 16 and wounding 12.

In December 1918 a National Congress of Workers and Soldiers Councils met in Berlin. Instead of becoming the permanent body governing Germany, as the Spartacists demanded, the Congress committed suicide by calling for a Constituent Assembly to set up a parliament. It was the death of the revolution. The Spartacist rising which followed the Congress was bungled, and had little chance of success. The civil war between revolutionary and reformist workers (the latter aided by the army and the fascist Free Corps), in which the best socialist militants like Rosa Luxemburg and Karl Liebknecht were butchered, was part of the tragic aftermath of this failure by the workers to break with reformism. The failure to create a socialist Germany ruled by workers councils paved the way for the victory of Hitler and the destruction of the German working class movement. As Marx pointed out, the final choice is between socialism and barbarism.

The working class must never ignore its own history. Mistakes have been made at the cost of much misery and suffering, and must not be repeated. There must be a total break with those like the Labour Party and the Communist Party who continue to agitate for reformism and a parliamentary road to socialism. But workers must not rely on any other leadership, "Revolutionary" or otherwise, to take power on its behalf. The result of that, as shown by Russia has been to destroy the workers councils and create a state capitalist society. Workers must take power into their own hands and smash the State machinery, governing society in their own interests through workers councils. Above all we must learn from the mistakes of the German working class in 1918, that, those who make a revolution by halves dig their own graves.

### FURTHER READING ON THE GERMAN REVOLUTION -

The German Revolution of 1918 - A.J. Ryder Cambridge University Press.  
Rosa Luxemburg - P. Frohlich, Pluto Press.

### FURTHER READING ON THE SPANISH REVOLUTION -

The Revolution and the Civil War in Spain - Bruce and Temime, Faber.  
Revolution and Counter Revolution in Spain - F. Morrow, New Park.  
Lessons of the Spanish Revolution - V. Richards, Freedom Press.  
Homage to Catalonia - G. Orwell, Penguin.  
Objectivity and Liberal Scholarship - N. Chomsky, in American Power and The New Mandarins Penguin.



COUNTER REVOLUTIONARY FREIKORPS IN MUNICH, 1919.



# councils

## SPAIN 1936

In July 1936 the Spanish military, in alliance with the Catholic Church, the Fascists, and the monarchists rose in revolt against the Left Republican government that had been elected a few months previously. They were resisted, not by that government, but by the Spanish working class, who set in motion one of the most fundamental revolutions of the 20th Century. Within days of the rebellion the mass organisations of the Spanish workers had inflicted severe defeat on the Fascists and their supporters in most of Spain, and especially in the major industrial areas. The bourgeois government of José Giral and Azana was powerless to resist either Franco or the workers' revolution. Wherever the Fascists were defeated, effective power passed from the middle class institutions to countless workers' committees, factory committees and peasant collectives. The Spanish working class began to organise itself for the fundamental tasks of defeating Fascism and consolidating and extending the social revolution.

The Civil War that ensued lasted nearly three years. By the time the Fascist victory was complete the social revolution was long dead. Within the Republican zone, the bourgeoisie, reduced to irrelevance in July 1936, slowly but inexorably reasserted its power. The working class suffered defeat after defeat. By 1939 'law and order' had been restored in Republican Spain. The workers' committees had been disbanded, revolutionary parties had been outlawed and thousands of working class militants had been gaoled, tortured and murdered. The Spanish revolution was defeated long before the final victory of Franco.

### WHAT HAPPENED ?

In 1936 the Republican State lost well over half its army and police force to the Fascist rebels. Faced with the rebellion, the government at first tried to negotiate, thus losing valuable time. In Madrid and Barcelona thousands of workers gathered outside government buildings demanding arms - and when it became obvious that they had to fight, the Spanish government at last issued arms to the working class organisations. Once the workers were armed, the best the State could hope for was a paper survival. Power was in the streets and in the factories, in the hands of the common people.

In Spain's major industrial region, Catalonia, lay the centre of working class Anarchism. Industry was expropriated and factory committees set up to provide the essentials necessary for the struggle against Fascism. The Catalan government was powerless. This was admitted by Companys, the Catalan president, who said to the Anarchist militants, Durruti and Oliver: "Today you are masters of the City. If you do not need me, or do not wish me to remain President of Catalonia, tell me now and I shall become one more soldier in the struggle against Fascism." His offer was not taken up. The first in a long chain of errors. The Catalan government was considered irrelevant. Economic power was in the hands of the workers, the police had been disarmed and police functions undertaken by armed workers' patrols. The Anarchist unions organised untrained and poorly armed militia to replace the now extinct Republican army and the long military struggle was begun without help from a government that was powerless to do anything but continue a shadowy existence. In Catalonia, and to a lesser extent throughout the rest of anti-Fascist Spain a regime of dual power was established.

In Madrid, Valencia and Malaga power lay with the joint Socialist-Anarchist committees. In Asturias, where the Communist Party had some influence, a system of workers' supervision was established, though the mines were rarely expropriated wholesale. Only in the Basque provinces did the capitalists retain control of the factories: and here, significantly resistance to Franco was short-lived and half-hearted.

### THE COUNTRY SIDE

The social revolution in industrial Spain had its counterpart in the agricultural regions. The crying need for land reform had been consistently ignored by both Left and Right in the Republican governments of 1931-36. Now the peasants were willing to wait no longer. The fields were expropriated, and those landlords that were not ordinarily absent were forced to flee or were executed. Village committees took over the administrative functions of the area, and hundreds of thousands of acres were collectivised. For the first time the Spanish peasantry felt in control of its own destiny and the results were remarkable. Production was actually increased, and this at a time when all the special difficulties



"LAND FOR THOSE WHO WORK IT."

ties of Civil War were present. With the help of the militias the last vestiges of the old regime were destroyed, and the peasantry declared in words and deeds their desire to aid the defeat of Fascism. How could a movement as widespread as this be defeated?

### THE ANARCHISTS

The responsibility of the Anarchist movement in launching the social revolution was enormous. Even in areas where Anarchism had little organised expression, the influence of Anarchist doctrine was incontestable. Over half of Spain's industrial workers belonged to the major Anarchist union, the CNT (National Confederation of Labour), given this situation it must be admitted that the responsibility for the eventual defeat of the social revolution rests heavily on the shoulders of the Anarchist movement. There were two fundamental failures, the failure to transform the workers' committees which were running industry, into workers' councils that would present a political challenge to the continued existence of the bourgeois State. And the failure to seize the financial institutions of the State; for when the middle class gathered courage to re-emerge, it found itself still in possession of the purse strings. The CNT-FAI leaders, with a naive attitude that indicates an ill acquaintance with Anarchist theory, propounded the notion that the industrial power of the workers had reduced and destroyed the bourgeois State. Juan Lopez, a CNT leader declared in September 1936, that the establishment of workers' committees "...has resulted in the disappearance of government delegates in the provinces we control... the local organs of administration of the old bourgeois regime have become mere skeletons because their life force has been replaced by the revolutionary vitality of the workers' unions."

But this was far from the case - the skeletons were soon fattened up, life was breathed into them. Prominent Anarchists of the CNT, with neither sanction or approval of the movement, entered the Republican government. This was done, it was said, to safeguard the revolutionary gains, and to contribute to anti-fascist unity. What nonsense! The best way to safeguard a revolution is to destroy the State, not become part of it. And 'anti-Fascist' unity is not possible with people whose initial concern is to destroy the revolutionary movement. Certain Anarchist leaders sacrificed the Spanish revolution for a suitcase full of ministerial portfolios.

### THE DESTRUCTION OF THE REVOLUTION

Regimes of dual power are inherently unstable. A struggle must take place between the working class and the old system, until one or other is victorious. The Spanish Anarchists, along with the revolutionary anti-Stalinist party, the POUM, had consistently rejected calls for the establishment of workers' councils. A facile identification of the workers' aspirations with those of the trade unions, both socialist and Anarchist, had meant the establishment of union committees,

rather than rank and file committees. There had even been bargaining for representation on committees for groups and parties with little or no influence in the area. For instance in Catalonia, the Central Committee of Anti-Fascist Militias, which was for many months the most important body in Catalonia, had fifteen members. Five were from the CNT-FAI, three from the Socialist UGT, one from the POUM, one from the Peasants Union, one from the Communists, and four from the bourgeois parties. Clearly, this is a deformed manifestation of workers' power, and the committee, formed by such a disparate group of people representing organisations rather than groups of workers in field and factory, was subject to 'politics' in the worst sense. It was divorced from the masses and beyond their immediate control.

The effect of this kind of organisation rapidly manifested itself after the entry of the Anarchists into government. Bourgeois authority and institutions were rapidly re-established. Sometimes at gunpoint. The last fling of the Spanish workers took place in Barcelona in May 1937. The story of that struggle has been told elsewhere in this paper - see May Day issue of *Libertarian Struggle*. The workers of Barcelona, abandoned by the Anarchist officialdom attempted to prevent the State seizure of the collectivised telephone exchange. In the armed conflict that followed, a dissident Anarchist group, the Friends of Durruti issued the following demands: Form revolutionary juntas disarm the Civil Guard, shoot those responsible for attacks on workers. Dissolve all political parties that have turned against the workers. But the time for the formation of workers councils was passed. The members and supporters of this group were imprisoned and executed. The CNT leadership - the Anarchist ministers - remained silent and allowed it to happen.

### CONCLUSION

Many Anarchist histories have concentrated on the counter-revolutionary role of the Communist Party. Yet this is to be expected from the Stalinists, whose policy of unity with the middle class means inevitable defeat for the masses, witness the events in Chile. The failure of Anarchism is far more disturbing. Essentially it is the failure of the Anarchosyndicalists who make a far too ready identification of their union with the working class as a whole. The way forward in a revolutionary situation is the rapid building of workers councils composed of delegates directly responsible to the workers who elected them. Union committees are no substitute for direct workers power. Spain marks the death knell of Anarcho-syndicalism as a movement, and should be its final discrediting as a theory. Revolutionary Anarchists call for 'All Power to Workers Councils' the failure of Spanish Anarcho-syndicalism to heed that call has subjected the Spanish working class to over three decades of Fascist tyranny. That is a lesson that must be learnt and learnt well.



WORKERS' MILITIA DEFEND MADRID, NOVEMBER 1936.



# NEW BUREAUCRACY STEAMROLLERS TRADES COUNCILS



LONDON TRADES COUNCIL DEMONSTRATION - They may get 100,000 on the streets but their future is 'doubtful' under TUC reorganisation policy.

The 1973 Trades Union Congress accepted a document from the General Council on the reorganisation of Trades Councils and their regional bodies. The acceptance of this document means the death of Trades Councils as we know them and their transformation into pressure group mouthpieces for the General Council and the full-time officials of regional union bodies.

At present the Trades Councils and the regional Federations of Trades Councils are all elected by the membership. There are also bodies called Regional Advisory Committees (R.A.C.s) which were set up during the war to liaise between Government and industry. These relics from Dad's Army exist in a sort of limbo at the moment, but their beauty is the fact that they are totally inactive and bother no one. They are chaired by a G.C. member resident in the area and probably other full time officials. Nobody really knows exactly who they are or how they are made up.

The T.U.C. plans to change this, however and create streamlined Regional Councils (based on the Government's Economic Planning Regions). They will be composed of 75% trade union officials and only 25% of people elected from the Trades Councils. Together with this, the chairman is to be whatever General Council member lives in the area and its secretary is to be appointed after consultation with 'local trade unionists'. This man is responsible to those who appointed him - the General Council.

The old federations are to be abolished to make way for County Associations based on the new County Councils. In doing this no account is taken of the long history of these bodies. The fact that agricultural and industrial areas with different objectives are being lumped together. Nor any account is taken of the fact that present-day co-operation between different sections of workers works well.

It was the R.A.C.s not the Trades Councils that the TUC sent questionnaires on reorganisation. And finally enough, the report came out too late for the Stockport Trades Councils Conference. And so was seen too late by the Trades Councils themselves for effective action at the Trades Union Congress.

The reasons that the TUC gives for its moves are interesting in themselves. The timing is linked to the Tories local government reorganisation. They are to be bodies to service local government sewage committees and present the trade union point of view. Given

this it follows that they have the same area structures and are bureaucratically structured so as the TUC's corporation can be channelled down to the local committee member.

The introduction to the document states democracy is not just casting votes but making our point of view known to the appropriate powers that be. The TUC we are told is doing this at national level, in fact so successfully that sometimes its difficult to know whose advice is being given to whom, but at local level the guidance and wisdom of the General Council is sadly lacking.

The Trades Councils, far from being local pressure groups, have traditionally given an outlet for the active politically-minded rank & file unionist, and if they have pressured anybody it is the TUC. Feather is still smarting after the mauling he was given by agricultural delegates at the Hastings Conference the year before last over a tied cottage that he owns. It is much easier for rank and file unionists to get to the Trades Council Conference than to the Trades Union Congress and a more militant position usually emerges. This year the Stockport Conference rejected the tripartite talks.

The Trades Councils have had a militant history that has often brought them into conflict with the General Council before. They did at one time send delegates to the TU Congress but this was stopped because of the calibre of militant that was getting through the net to expose the collaborationist policies of the TUC. Similarly many Trades Councils were disaffiliated for belonging to the Minority Movement, a rank and file movement with enormous prestige in the 20s.

At present the Trades Councils have engaged themselves in support for strike activities as well as in local struggles around issues like the Unfair Rent Act. If it were not for the activities of Trades Councils many of the May Day demonstrations would not have occurred.

This is the role the Trades Councils should play, not the lap dog of the General Council to be trotted by local government committees. Whereas before, the inertia of the old R.A.C.s made them harmless, the TUC's new structure could put Trades Councils under the permanent domination of full-timers and the General Council. This would further cut back its role in presenting an opportunity for rank and file opposition to TUC policy and for providing solidarity action for local unionists in dispute.

## letters

Dear Libertarian Struggle,

For some unknown reason the editing group of issue No. 7 printed a letter from a comrade criticising an article on Free Speech (Libertarian Struggle No. 6). The whole tone of the letter is symptomatic of the ideas of 'radical liberalism' as attacked in the article on Free Speech, and the letter was unaccompanied, surprisingly by any editorial comment. Why?

Comrade G. has managed to misquote the article so as to lead into a small but shabby tirade calling for Free Speech as a moral principle. He said: 'It was stated that the action of CP/ML was understandable but technically wrong.' The article in No. 6 actually said: 'The attack on Eysenck at LSE was tactically inept but not morally wrong.' The article never said that the attack was 'understandable'. In fact it went into great detail to show otherwise. Why does comrade G deliberately misquote?

The rest of comrade G's letter contained some of the worst anti-working class rhetoric that has been printed outside of the bourgeois press. Why did the editors let such drivel pass uncriticised? Free Speech in the working class movement becomes for comrade G -

'falling for the old ploy that whatever a member of the working class does is right and everyone else is wrong. The working class contains the bulk of reactionary elements albeit caused by oppressive conditioning.'

This line also claims that workers are 'partial to the persecution of hippies, homosexuals and revolutionaries' showing G's complete lack of trust that the working class is capable of making any revolutionary progress. Who will make the revolution comrade G?

Comrade G also states: 'Everyone has the right to Free Speech even racists and bigots. People should be encouraged to respect free speech in this society otherwise we cannot expect toleration after the revolution.'

G misses the point that a revolution is a most 'intolerant' act. It is when the masses no longer 'tolerate' those who express certain ideas and decide to dispose of them in a most intolerant manner. If the working class have preserved free speech in their own ranks (excluding racists and bigots) a free society will be made.

Comrade G finally completes his idiosyncrasy with the statement: 'If we are not to create a sympathetic atmosphere towards fascists we must treat them, not as a political danger, but as cranks in the same class as flat earth believers and the moon is green cheese believers.'

Perhaps comrade G should explain to the Italian, Spanish and German and Chilean working class that fascism is not 'a political danger'. Perhaps when the British equivalent of Grossdeutschland SS divisions after a weekend practice in Northern Ireland, trundles past his door he will find that the readers of Libertarian Struggle have not taken his advice. Perhaps he will find that they have consigned comrade G to the realms of cranks whose position he has most aptly outlined in his stupid anti-working class letter.

Yours,  
Trevor Savage.



## Revelations

Following the revelation that the Guru Maharaj Ji's paper 'Divine Times' is printed by the International Socialists, comes the as yet unsubstantiated rumour that I.S. is to set up a preachers, healers and missionaries' rank and file paper called 'Miracle Worker'.

## LIBERTARIAN COMMUNIST REVIEW

Revolutionary Anarchist Quarterly.

No. 1. Now available.

IN THIS ISSUE:-

Anarcho-syndicalism & council communism

Building the Vanguard?

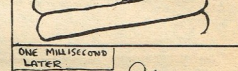
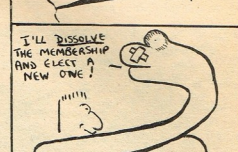
The Wage Freeze

Sectarianism

plus REVIEWS

PRICE 15p. Available from L.C.R., 277, Kingsway Park, Doyhulme, Manchester.

## snake



WHY APOLOGUES TO ART BUNCH.



## REVIEWS:

# IT HAPPENED HERE

Old readers of 'Freedom' will probably remember John McGuffin better as the "Rev. Augustus Berke", whose reports from Northern Ireland a few years ago did much to inform us of the situation there, besides considerably brightening that otherwise uninteresting publication. He has just produced this excellent history of internment and its use in Britain and Ireland over the last 60 years. As such it is a valuable contribution to the growing understanding of revolutionaries in this country of what the Irish people are up against in their struggle against imperialism. In other respects, the book is seriously lacking.

McGuffin has clearly shown that internment is primarily a political weapon, which has been consistently used by the London, Dublin and Stormont governments to crush opposition to British control of Ireland, and not to 'protect the public against a handful of gunmen', as ruling-class propaganda would have us believe. He himself has had first-hand experience of internment, having been lifted in the "sweep" of 9th August 1971, and it is not surprising that he concentrates a large part of this book on the personal experiences of those who have been interned over different periods. It is remarkable that despite the appalling conditions in the camps and prisons the tortures, beatings, and humiliations, so many internees remained unbroken in spirit, and carried on their resistance to oppression even while in captivity.

Internment succeeded in Ireland in the 20's, 40's, and late 50's, but failed in 1971. McGuffin points out that the IRA campaign of 1956-62 failed because it was concentrated on the border areas and received little rural support. The Belfast IRA was not directly involved in the campaign, so their internment made little difference to the final outcome. Faulkner believed that it was primarily due to internment that the campaign had been defeated, and was convinced that its introduction in 1971 would end IRA military activities. It failed miserably. The IRA knew in advance that it was coming. Not only did the vast majority of its membership escape, but the brutality and crass stupidity of the military in carrying out the operation, acted to unite the majority of the Catholic population in solid support of the Provisionals.

The subsequent torture and 'ultra-treatment' of internees has been well documented, and this book gives a useful summary of the large number of cases which came to light. Internment has been brutally treated before, but this time torture was used systematically and in the express orders of the government. As a means of obtaining intelligence, torture is about as inefficient method as you can get, as the British military (with its long experience in these matters) must have known. The reason why it was used so widely and on such unlikely people was because it was seen as a means to intimidate the whole Catholic population. Most of the people initially lifted were trades unionists, tenants and squatters leaders, civil rights workers, Peoples Democracy socialists, like John McGuffin—in other words, those who were active in organising civil resistance to the Orange regime. The government hoped that a good dose of 'the treatment' would deter them and others in the community from continuing their militant opposition. Instead, Faulkner and Co. got the massive rents and rates strike, a concerted campaign of civil disobedience, the establishment of the "No-go" areas, and a huge influx of new volunteers into the ranks of the Provos. The government took increasingly more desperate measures to stem the tide, culminating in the infamous Bloody Sunday massacre in Derry. Two months after, Stormont was abolished.

The main weakness of the book lies in the fact that its author steers clear of any real political analysis of the Irish struggle. We get no inkling of his attitude to the political aims of the Republicans or to the Provisionals' campaign. Those who had hoped that this book would give a libertarian perspective on the Irish situation (assuming one is possible), will be disappointed.

The confusion of the British Left about Ireland, and its reluctance to come to grips with the situation, has led one Republican newspaper to remark bitterly: "When it comes to Ireland, internationalism stops at Hollyhead." It is all very well for revolutionaries in this country to state that the activities of the IRA alienate potential support from the British working class movement. Republicans can reply, with some justification, that the British workers have never been conspicuously active in support of struggles other than their own. Anarchists have traditionally taken a sceptical view of "national liberation struggles", posing Utopian solutions which bear no relationship to situations as they exist. In the case of Ireland, Britain is the oppressing power however, and for anarchists in this country to adopt such a purist position is a complete abdication of libertarian principles. This is not to suggest that we give uncritical support to the IRA, but that the least we can do is take active part in a campaign based on the demands of ending internment and withdrawing British troops.

In recent times we have seen in this country the increasing use of State repression against Republicans, blacks, strikers, and dissidents of all kinds on the left. The hysteria that is



British troops arresting a youth in Coalisland, County Tyrone, in December 1971.

being whipped up as a result of the present bombings in Britain, and the increasing number of 'conspiracy' trials are grim portents of what is to come. Those who believe that "it could never happen here" would do well to read this

book, 'Internment', paying particular attention to the following passage:

"William Burroughs has said, "a paranoid is someone who has some small idea of what is really going on." I began to see his point."

# ORWELL RECONSIDERED

For many years George Orwell's writings have been used by right-wingers to discredit all socialist and revolutionary movements. 'Animal Farm' and '1984' show that socialism is inevitably linked with a totalitarian nightmare, and that any attempt to change society in a revolutionary manner will always fail. Raymond Williams shows that Orwell was not the decent, plain-living anti-revolutionary that he is usually seen to be, and that the right-wing interpretation of Orwell is completely false.

Williams points out that Orwell was born and educated into the ruling class of an imperialist Britain. His experience of imperialism, while serving in Burma, drove him to reject his class and turn towards the working class. "I wanted to submerge myself, to get right down among the oppressed," he once wrote. But, Williams points out, Orwell could never understand the working class. He was never able to fully reject his class position, and saw himself as an outsider come to help the dumb oppressed. They were "people who had never learned to think, but who were storing up in their hearts and bellies and muscles, the power that would one day overturn the world", he wrote in 1944. He has his own definition of what the working class is like. He is embarrassed when he meets working people who call him 'comrade' and sees a local trade union official living in an "entirely middle-class atmosphere". If workers are not visibly oppressed, then they are really middle-class to Orwell.

This shows the extent of Orwell's socialism until the late 1930's. It is a negative response to imperialism, privilege and poverty. There is no thought of revolutionary struggle to end these conditions. There is just a possible protest. This view arises from his middle-class position. Williams shows that Orwell's socialism was very English. He sees class privilege in terms of accents, clothes, styles of eating, and furnishing—a view of class held by most English social democrats right through the last Labour government. England is merely "a family with the wrong members in control". But why are the wrong members in control? It is merely a deference to 'better' accents or 'better' clothes? Such a view disguises the

fact that class is a powerful economic relationship between the owners of property and capital on the one hand, and the owners only of labour and skill, on the other.

Orwell's very English, undoctinal socialism was shaken when he went to Spain during the Civil War. He joined the militia of the semi-Trotskyist P.O.U.M. (Unified Marxist Workers' Party). In Catalonia, where a socialist revolution had taken place, workers had seized factories, which they ran themselves. Peasants had seized the estates. When Orwell went to Barcelona he said, "It was the first time that I had ever been in a town where the working class was in the saddle. Practically every building of any size had been seized by the workers and was draped with red flags or with the red and black flag of the anarchists... everyone wore rough working-class clothes, or blue overalls, or some variant of the militia uniform." This, and the experience of fighting in a revolutionary army, where officers were elected and drew the same pay as the soldiers, had a deep effect on Orwell. "I have seen wonderful things and at last believe in Socialism, which I never did before," he wrote in a letter.

Orwell wanted to join the International Brigade (under Communist control), so that he could fight in Madrid, but changed his mind when the Communists attacked the Anarchists and the P.O.U.M. in Barcelona in May, 1937. This was followed by the suppression of the P.O.U.M. and the crushing of the revolution in Catalonia. Orwell became aware of the importance of differences between the different parties fighting for the Republic. Whereas the P.O.U.M. and the Anarchists were fighting for a revolutionary Spain, the Communists wished to destroy the revolution to make the republic respectable in the eyes of capitalist Britain and France. Orwell, seeing his friends arrested and shot, ceased Spain just ahead of Communist police. The effect of Spain was not to turn him into an anti-Communist, but an anti-Stalinist (the two should not be confused.) He became a revolutionary socialist. This is why 'Homage to Catalonia', where he describes his Spanish experience was not popular with the English Left in the 1930's, nor with those who were to draw comfort from his later novels. It is written by a revolutionary hostile both to orthodox Communism and

to capitalist democracy.

But in the England of the 1930's and 1940's, there was no revolutionary movement to turn towards. The outbreak of war showed Orwell that he had not broken away completely from his class origins. He had "the emotion of the middle class man, brought up in the military tradition, who finds in the moment of crisis that he is a patriot after all". Orwell became a reluctant supporter of the Labour Party, hoping against hope that somehow the war would defeat Hitler and the English class system at the same time. The hope was not fulfilled, and Orwell moved into a deeply pessimistic view of life. 'Animal Farm' is about the betrayal of a revolution, and the pigs who become the new rulers of the animals, are the same as the men who used to exploit them. There is no apology for those who had been the previous rulers. '1984' is about the nightmarish society where there is no more opposition to the government—no strikes, no revolutionary movement—and where the state controls everything and everybody. Williams criticises Orwell for identifying this society with Stalinism. He knew perfectly well that political police, censorship and propaganda were not a socialist or communist invention. Williams correctly writes, "By assigning all modern forms of repression and authoritarian control to a single political tendency, he... cut short the kind of analysis of these inhuman and destructive forces wherever they appeared, under whatever names and masked by whatever ideology." Our experience of an affluent and militaristic capitalism shows the strength and weakness of '1984' as a political novel. However, what was for Orwell a nightmare has become for many a comfortable view of the world; those hostile to change and blind to oppression and suffering in capitalism.

However, as Williams ends this excellent book, "the thing to do with his work, his history is to read it, not imitate it. He is still there. But as we reach out to touch him we catch some thing of his hardness, a necessary hardness. We are acknowledging a presence and a distance; other names, other years; a history to respect, to remember, to move on from."



# CHILE - PARLIAMENTARY CHILE - ROAD TO DISASTER

The world's press has described Salvador Allende as "the world's first democratically elected Marxist leader". The social democrat and socialist parties in particular have seen this as a vindication of the belief that socialism could be achieved through the ballot box.

Chile was looked upon as the model which would eventually be copied by the rest of Latin America. Working class revolution and armed struggle were held to be things of the past. What was their necessity, now that the State (or at least part of it) was in the hands of the workers' "representatives"?

The recent events in Chile have shown once again the criminal folly of such beliefs. Allende's "peaceful road" has been far from peaceful, and has led not to socialism but to fascist military rule.

## CHILE'S PROBLEMS

The 1960's saw the deepening of Chile's social/crisis. Rising unemployment and continuing inflation (at a rate of 30% a year), combined with the perennial Latin American problems of rural poverty and illiteracy, produced an explosive situation. Urban workers demanded higher wages and widespread nationalisation. In the countryside, the landless peasants living in virtual serfdom on the big estates demanded a massive redistribution of land and the establishment of adequate medical facilities and services.

In 1964 the Christian Democrat Party under the leadership of Frei came to power on the promise of implementing large scale reforms. Frei proved to be a miserable failure. Unemployment rose even higher and the rate of inflation increased. Nothing was done to combat illiteracy or provide medical services in the rural areas. The Chilean peasantry gained the dubious distinction of having one of the highest infant mortality rates in Latin America. The promised land reforms came to nothing. Only a tiny proportion of land was redistributed so that by 1969 over 60% of all arable land was owned by less than 600 people.

What the Chilean workers did get in plenty from Frei was repression. Militants were imprisoned and left wing papers banned. Protest was met with brute force. In the November 1967 General Strike six people were killed by the police. Other massacres followed. Mass discontent reached boiling point, and this period saw the beginning of the peasant expropriations

in the countryside which were to continue throughout Allende's rule. In the cities, strikes reached record numbers, and a mass squatting movement by the homeless was in full swing.

Allende won the 1970 Presidential election simply because the right-wing parties could not form a common front against him. Many disillusioned PDC supporters switched their votes to the ultra-conservative National Party. The result was that Allende got in with only 36.3% of the vote - not much higher than he received when he stood against Frei in 1964.

The programme of Allende's UP (Unidad Popular) - the coalition whose main elements were the Chilean Communist Party and Allende's own Socialist Party, was unashamedly state capitalist. Allende planned to nationalise the banking, insurance and trading companies, as well as the main industrial and mining concerns. Small and medium industries would remain in private hands. The nationalised sector would be run by state appointees, not by the workers.

Nevertheless, such a programme could never be accepted by the Chilean bourgeoisie. The right wing parties controlled congress, so Allende found it necessary to compromise on the programme in order to stay in power. The nationalisation of most companies was 'postponed' - Allende hoped that the Congressional elections of 1973 would give the UP a majority.

## THE WORKERS FIGHT BACK

Despite Allende's compromises the working class pressed ahead with its demands. His promise to "lay the foundations of socialism" had opened up a Pandora's box which no amount of bargaining with the police, class and half-hearted concessions to the workers could close. Workers and peasants began to arm themselves in preparation for the struggle they knew was bound to come. Factory occupations and rural expropriations continued unabated. Allende was caught in an impossible situation. He could not legally carry through his programme because of the forces arranged against him in Congress. If he was to attempt extra-legal measures, this would obviously lead to a right wing coup. On the other hand, if he did not fulfil his promise, the workers would take decisions into their own hands and sweep aside Allende and his reformist coalition for good.

## THE SWING TO THE RIGHT

As support for Allende dwindled among the workers, he became increasingly reliant on the Army. UP propaganda consistently extolled the 'democratic' traditions of the Chilean Army, which unlike most others in Latin America, did not have a history of intervention into politics. The military budget was increased. All ranks received handsome pay increases. Officers were given cheap housing and extra 'fringe benefits'. Most important of all, the military was given a virtually free hand to disarm the workers.

In the meantime the Chilean bourgeoisie had been active in making life as difficult as possible for the government. Investment was taken out of the country (in the first week after Allende's victory, over \$20m left Chile). Their strategy was to create an economic crisis which would give the army an excuse to intervene to 'restore order'. In this they were directly aided by international capitalism which made sure that it would be impossible for Chile to obtain desperately needed credits from foreign banks and governments. The Nixon government put pressure on international aid agencies to cut down on their aid programmes for Chile. The CIA was directly involved in numerous plots to overthrow Allende, as the recent revelations about the ITT affair have shown. All this, combined with the falling world prices of copper (which constitute 70% of Chilean exports) produced inflation and commodity scarcity of staggering proportions. The position was made worse by the recent 'bosses strike' of lorry owners, shopkeepers and the professional classes, when the Government had to use the Army to transport vital supplies.

In such a desperate situation the only way out for Allende would have been to appeal to the working class to seize power for themselves to forestall the inevitable coup. Some members of the coalition were in favour of this, but the Communist Party, which throughout has been the most right wing element in the UP, bitterly opposed it. The CP strategy was to "win over the middle classes", and to do this it was prepared to abandon every radical aspect of the UP programme. In 1972, the Party proposed more concessions to the Christian Democrats, including cutting down drastically on the num-

ber of companies to be nationalised, compensating their former owners, halting the land reform programme, sacking the more radical members of the government and abandoning the long-term policy of replacing Congress with a Popular Assembly. Since then Allende has conceded most of these points, as well as agreeing to de-nationalise those companies that had previously been expropriated without congressional assent.

The CP has also proved to be the most diligent in repressing the left. In Concepcion, in Southern Chile, an anti-fascist demonstration was brutally broken up by the police on the orders of Chavez, the mayor of the town and a member of the CP central committee. A week later, the CP governor of the province of Cautin ordered the riot squad to "use maximum force" to smash a peasants' demonstration protesting about the lack of medical facilities in the area. The Communists have also been the most forthright in demanding the use of the Army against "the armed groups of the ultra-left" i.e. the workers. It is certainly no thanks to the CP that, when the coup came, at least some workers were sufficiently armed to defend themselves no matter how much it may claim that it was stockpiling its own arms for such an eventuality.

## POSSIBILITIES FOR THE FUTURE

The only major grouping on the left that has consistently advocated revolutionary action has been the MIR (Movimiento de Izquierda Revolucionaria - or Movement of the Revolutionary Left). In 1970 it had no real mass base, though its militants numbered several thousand. With the disillusionment of many Allende-istas it has since gained significant support among certain sections of the working class, notably in Concepcion and among the thousands of squatters in Santiago. By supporting the mass actions of the peasantry and the workers' occupations of the factories, it has provided a revolutionary alternative to the reformism of the UP. While some workers have been demoralised by the treachery of the CP, many others have at last seen through the illusions of "the peaceful road". The growing strength of the recently formed Revolutionary Workers Front (which unites the MIR with the small trotskyst and Maoist groups) among hitherto loyal UP supporters is part of the explanation for the increasingly hysterical attacks on the "ultra-left" by the UP. The other part of the explanation is that the government was prepared to do anything to show the ruling class how 'respectable' and 'constitutional' it really was. Allende went so far as to bring the military chiefs into his government in order to placate the army and be seen as the upholder of "law and order".

The programme of the MIR, though essentially revolutionary, should be criticised. There is no firm commitment to direct workers' control of all industry and no guarantee that political power will rest in the hands of the working class through democratic workers' councils. What seems to be envisaged is a kind of dual power of a centralised state and workers' and peasants assemblies, and history has shown the contradiction of such a position. Nevertheless this statist element should not blind libertarians to the fact that the MIR is not a bolshevik type organisation. Its social composition has been fast changing with the entry of large numbers of highly politicised workers whose spontaneous actions over the last year show that they have the willingness and the capacity to take control into their own hands. Some points of the programme are clearly out of date and others may be rendered irrelevant as the revolutionary events set in motion take their course.

The present military junta may have achieved temporary control of the situation, but given the polarisation of the classes and the present relationship of forces in Chile, it cannot hope to last long. The parallels with the Spanish Revolution of 1936 are obvious. Let us hope that the Chilean workers have learnt the lessons of their own recent history and reject once and for all the blind alley of reformism. It may be too much to hope also that the advocates of the "parliamentary road" in this country and elsewhere will have also learnt from the Chile experience that no ruling class will ever give up its power peacefully.



PEASANTS GUARDING OCCUPIED FARM IN CAUTIN PROVINCE WITH SHOTGUNS



No.9

NOVEMBER 1973

5p

# libertarian struggle



FOR WORKERS POWER

**RENTS** ....



## THE RIGHT TO STEAL LEGALLY

**INSIDE: CHRYSLER • LABOUR PARTY •**

**PHASE THREE • SHREWSBURY 24 •**

**LONDON TEACHERS • ETC •**

paper of the Organisation of Revolutionary Anarchists



# DEFEND THE 24!

August 1972 saw the culmination of years of negotiations and minor disputes between building workers and bosses over pay demands, conditions (toilets, canteens etc.) and the use of lump labour on building sites.

For years the employers have encouraged individual workers to register as self-employed casual labour. Under this system workers have no stamps and avoid being taxed. This in turn enables the employer to pay less to the worker and avoid paying insurance contributions himself. This policy makes the worker illegal and forces him to move from site to site. He is paid by the day and any sign of militancy means he's sacked on the spot.

Lump labour is used by the bosses to break any attempt to organise and fight for better conditions. Also these workers are not compensated for industrial accidents and deaths. One death for every working day.

Sites are spread over vast areas and for the strike to spread and prove effective the 'flying picket' tactic was adopted. This involved coach loads of strikers travelling from site to site arguing about the situation with other building workers and mobilising active support. This tactic was originally started by the miners during their strike in 1971.

In North Wales the workers also adopted this course of action. The main activity was centred around Shrewsbury, North Wales dis-

trict, and Telford, where the new town development run by the giant McAlpine building contractors were signing up lump labour.

The police continually followed the pickets and commended their behaviour. Six months after the campaign to stop lump labour began, 24 workers were arrested by the same body of policemen and charged with causing an affray, intimidation and damage to property. The jury obviously found the men not guilty on the charge of causing an affray - the courts have substituted a charge of unlawful assembly - A charge of far-reaching implications.

Altogether 243 charges have been brought against the 24. It will cost the state an estimated £250,000 to proceed with the trial. In spite of this the state is trying to cover up the trial because, with the worsening economic crisis, capitalism has little room in which to manoeuvre. It has been shown in the past that the capitalist class will attack working class living standards by severely cutting wages, and trying to crush any attempts of working people organising against it.

The two big unions involved, UCATT and the T&G, have backed down from the fight

and are guiding their own members into court on the grounds that these are criminal charges and they are offering no legal aid. The union leaderships have shown themselves incapable of any foresight into the coming struggles of their members.

The Communist Party dominated 'rank and file' Charter group have been concentrating only on pressurising the union leadership. They have advocated a purely defensive struggle. They have avoided the political nature of the trial like the plague. During the building workers strike their paper did not appear on co. They were scared of antagonizing the union bureaucracy.

During the recent public meetings, called to build support for the Shrewsbury 24, they have constantly avoided criticism of the union bureaucrats. However, many workers are voicing their contempt for the union's role.

At the recent Tory conference delegates attacked flying pickets as criminal elements in the Trade Union movement. Some party members demanded the banning of picket lines at sites and factories. A moderate call was for a maximum of two trade unionists (and no-one else) to man limited pickets. The second of

the two right wing demands is the one most likely to become law in the near future.

The TUC has continued to cooperate with the Tories in spite of the series of attacks that began with the Industrial Relations Act through to Phase 3. The UCATT and T&G failure to defend the Shrewsbury 24 is part of the TUC's overall policy.

It is the building workers and hospital workers, and the other low-paid, who the Tories have tried to goad. They hope after their bloody nose with the Pentonville 5 that this is the weak point of the working class movement.

The defence of the 24 will only succeed if workers take the kind of mass action they did to release the Pentonville 5. Success will not mean the end of the bosses attacks. A cohesive rank and file national organisation is a basic precondition of this. The creation and extension of site steward combines there fore represents the most basic need in the building industry at present.

John Manning

## WINTER OFFENSIVE

In the last few years, there has been much talk of 'winter offensives' by the more optimistic (or utopian?) on the left. Large sections of workers have engaged in lengthy and often bitter strikes. This situation looks very likely to occur again this winter. But to imagine that militancy alone can beat the pay laws and Phase 3 is to ignore what has happened in the last 'winter offensives'.

The struggles involving postmen, miners, railwaymen, gas workers, hospital workers, power-workers, civil servants and London teachers have had varying results depending on how far the rank and file were able to organise to take the running of their strikes into their own hands. In this way the miners were able to win, whereas the hospital workers and postmen who, by and large, let their leaders dictate the course of the strike were totally beaten.

It is also vital that not only should the rank and file take over the running of their struggles, but that workers in different industries form co-ordinated linking bodies. This has happened in the last two years. The solidarity that the miners could call on from all sections of the working class was seen in the mass picket of Saltley Coke Depot. Many workers struck in support of the hospital workers. Public service workers formed cross-industry alliances of hospital workers, civil servants and teachers. The extension of this kind of co-ordination with the rank and file firmly in control is the only way that the working class can use its strength in what, this winter, will be an open confrontation between the class and the government.

To expect the trade union bureaucrats and the TUC to help in this struggle is to ignore the historic 'buffer role' that they play. In contrast to the beginnings of co-ordinated activity that the working class started to develop last year the TUC:-

- Delayed calling a special congress until 5th March against Phase One (which the government introduced in November).
- Tried to prevent (unsuccessfully) that conference taking decisions.
- Blocked moves for a general strike with the Jones-Scanlon motion for a one-day protest.
- Delayed calling that strike until May 1st by which time it hoped (rightly) that by stalling, the hospital workers and others would have been defeated.

Made sure that the May 1st strikes would only really be taken by 'inviting' unions to take part.

Gomley, President of the NUM, stated quite correctly that the TUC had either to wage all-out opposition to the Tory government or not bother at all. As usual the TUC took the course of 'left' rhetoric combined with compromise and behind the scenes collaboration. It is matching the words with consistent action that wins struggles, i.e. the content and not just the form.

All kinds of tactics have been discovered or re-discovered by the working class in the last two years that have helped to strengthen self-confidence. The flying picket used by the miners and building workers proved very successful in the car-worker's fight at Chrysler. The occupations, sit-ins and work-ins that have taken place at BSA, Bryant, the Manchester engineering works, UCS, Fakenham, Plessey, Fisher-Bendix etc have brought into the open not just the question of which tactics to use, but of the ownership and control of the means of production.

This is not to dismiss the very reformist nature of some of the work-ins or the role of the Stalinists in them. At each step of struggle we have to assess how each tactic used has brought forward opportunities for autonomous working class activity.

This winter sees trouble looming for the government from several sections of the working class. It seems likely that the engineers, the power-workers, the miners, the dockers, civil servants, postal workers and others will be taking industrial action. If none of the lessons that the working class has painfully learnt in the last couple of years is applied, if each group of workers is content to let the leadership run the strikes; and is happy to let each union go down separately then the ruling class will have the go-ahead to take further steps to the corporate state and to cut the wages and living standards of the working class. This is the reality of the 'winter offensive'.

A T.G.W.U. MEMBER



### ABOUT 'LIBERTARIAN STRUGGLE'

This paper is written and produced by militants all over the country, who are active in their trade unions, tenants' associations, claimants' unions, womens' liberation groups, schools, colleges and universities.

We are united by our membership of the ORA a democratically organised group, which fights for a libertarian communist revolution. This means a revolution brought about, and firmly controlled by the working class. This is the only foundation for a society in which production is for need, not profit, free from exploitation and oppression.

The only way working class power can express itself, is through workers' councils in the factories and through neighbourhood councils in the communities. Demands for improvement in workers' living standards, whether wages, better housing, etc. are not purely economic demands. The working class must make each demand a move towards the control of production and the control of their own lives. Therefore every organisation and struggle of the working class must be directly and democratically controlled by the workers involved. Consequently we oppose all groups and parties who take the initiative and control from the working class.

As part of our attempt to put this kind of politics into practice, we have rotating editorship of each issue of this paper. We produce the paper (none of us are professional journalists) to provide one means of spreading some hidden facts, of publicising what workers are thinking and doing, to workers in other industries, and other parts of the country, to talk about what claimants, women, immigrants, pensioners and school-kids are doing, and to show how these battles can be united.

We won't give you the familiar shit about, "this is your paper". What we do say is:  
- USE this paper,  
- pass on what you've learnt,  
- contact others in a similar situation.

We know that lots of people have no practice at writing articles - but who needs literary genius? An essential factor in the development of the working class movement is the communication of details and the lessons of its various struggles.

WORKERS' POWER - NO SUBSTITUTE!



# PHASE 3

## THE LATEST ATTACK

### ON THE WORKING CLASS

Phase Three is now being introduced by the Tories. The TUC go scuttling to beg a few crumbs and at the same time give Heath's legislation an air of respectability. On each occasion the TUC meets Heath to negotiate, the proposals that afterwards leave Downing Street appear to the working class to be 'approved' by the workers' representatives. The representatives being the delegates from the General Council of the TUC as led by ex-Oxford General Secretary Len Murray, the new replacement for Vic Feather.

What does this 'negotiation' produce? What gains have the TUC delegates made for the members of the labour movement, of which a large number have demanded that the shun talks cease?

Heath's Phase Three is a tougher control of all wages and a licence for employers to reap bigger and better profits at the cost of the living standards of the working class. All of Heath's proposals are embroidered with minor 'concessions' to give the impression of 'fairness' and 'generosity' to the anti-working class proposals. A £10 'gift' to the pensioners and the possibility of subsidised mortgages, plus the talk about 'assistance' to lower paid workers, act as a cover for £100 cutbacks in school and hospital building expenditure, and little change in the general pay proposals and an end to nearly every restriction on profits.

#### BOSSSES' CHARTER

Phase Three is no more than a charter for the bosses. A charter of that one and only freedom that is dear to every Tory heart - the right to Free Enterprise - the freedom to exploit. A close inspection of the proposals clearly shows that restrictions on the employers and investors are to be kept to a minimum:

- (1) The reduction of the number of profit margins that were limited to 10%

- (2) Dividend increases of 5% to be allowed, all restrictions on dividends for 'new' investments to be lifted
- (3) Rent on business premises to be frozen
- (4) Depreciation of machinery to be considered a production cost and used in application for price rises
- (5) Medium-sized firms only need to notify the Prices and Incomes Board of price rises, and do not need to gain the permission of the Board

What 'fairness' and 'generosity' are there in these measures? Business premises rents frozen to cut overheads and raise profits while the rest of the working class suffers from the 'Fair Rents' act and the results of the interest war between banks and building societies, and widespread speculation on land and buildings. Profits are given every chance to increase while negligible 'restrictions' are placed on dividends to give the appearance of a balance between the control of prices and wages.

#### "FAIRNESS"

This Tory legislation package contains an even more cynical effort in its announcements of 'fairness' over the section of Phase Three concerning wages. Using the traditional lie that severe cuts in the rises of higher wage earners assist the lower paid, the Tories have offered the unions a meagre lump sum and are encouraging the membership of these unions to fight amongst themselves for the crumbs. This has been done not by offering the wage rise ceiling in the form of 7% or £2.25 per head, but by pointing out that the wage rises can be calculated as a total for a workforce and then spread out 'evenly' to affect the lower paid in that workforce. The maximum wage rise under this 'uneven' system is to be £350.

The total of 7% is in some cases less than the £1 plus 4% of Phase Two. The cheapest Tory attempt to allay the workers' fears of inflation is the 40p a week rise for the 1% rise in the retail price index (calculated by the Tories of course). This only comes into effect when the 7% has already been neutralised by inflation. The most important fact that has had little emphasis placed on it in the bourgeois press is that the workers have to fight the employers to even gain the wage levels in Phase Three. The employers are in no way encouraged to pay up to Heath's rulings on wage ceilings.

#### PAY CUT

Phase three is to be enforced for the next twelve months by the Tory government with restrictions on profits cut, and controls on wages tightened. The massive inflation during the coming year will annihilate the effects of any wage rises that have been obtained within the limits set down by the Tories. Phase 3 amounts to no more than a large cut in wages when seen in this perspective.

The final offer of Tory 'generosity' was the decree that New Year's Day be a public holiday. The New Year's Day holiday has been in unofficial operation for years. The Tories were just conforming a fact and dressing it up as an act of benevolence.

There is nothing benevolent about Phase Three - it is a direct attack on the working class and it is a preparation for the major offensive to come.

~ ~

BOB CAMPBELL

# JAPANESE

## ABORTION

The Japanese Government is now attempting to revise a liberal abortion law that has been on the statute books since 1949, because they are worried by "the severe labour shortage and its effects on the nation's industrial growth". The bill was originally passed in the lean years after the second world war, when few Japanese could afford to have many children. The attempt to revise the bill, by deleting "economic reasons" as grounds for abortion, and replacing it with "Mother's mental and physical health" - which is far harder to define - demonstrates only too clearly the 'unpleasant face of capitalism' in yet another guise. Abortions are granted, or not, on economic grounds - whatever the clauses in the laws state. The State manipulates people to provide them with more industrial fodder, or with less, depending on its economic requirements.

The removal of widely available abortion facilities in a country where the pill is very difficult to obtain and where abortion is the main method of contraception, will have disastrous consequences for many unwilling mothers forced into producing the nation's workers. That abortion is practised as the main form of contraception is wholly wrong, but to deny women even this method of preventing unwanted motherhood is just another example of the control that capitalism has over our lives.

A similar situation has already developed

in some East European countries. For example Rumania has increased the birth rate from 15 to 27 births per thousand of the population by banning abortion, ceasing to import the pill, (which is not manufactured in Rumania despite the highly developed state of the pharmaceutical industry) and by virtually banning divorce. These draconian measures have been used to satisfy an estimated 80% increase in the demand for labour.

Whilst the major part of the burden of such State manipulation naturally falls on the women (who in Rumania are still expected to increase their percentage of the work force beyond the present 61%), such action oppresses the husbands and fathers too. For if children are conceived unwillingly they present a financial and emotional burden to the rest of the family. Fathers must give their time to their children, they must work more to pay for their needs; sisters and brothers must share their parents' love and time with the extra ones, and so on. Unwanted children are like stones in a pond - the ripples spread right across the water. In fact, the whole society is made subservient to the greedy demands of the State and is kept cowed by the reliance on State aid that nuclear families bring. Keeping a population on the 'straight and narrow' is done by the use of the power of the State - controlling and manipulating family size is just another way of doing this.

# FATAL

## STATISTICS

- Over 2000 people are killed at work or die of industrial disease annually
- 70,000 workers are injured by cutting instruments
- Approximately 34,000 people are injured just falling over at work
- There are 19,563 fractures
- 16,000 are burnt at work
- 14,445 suffer lacerations
- 14,000 had a foreign body in an eye
- 13,000 fall from ladders and scaffolding
- 7,920 are crushed
- There are 1,799 concussions
- There are 1,489 amputations
- There are 1,096 dislocations
- 796,000 workers are injured in Britain annually

(From the British Clinical Journal, July 1973)

#### FOOTNOTE TO THE COD WAR

British trawlers off Iceland have made good returns during the past year in spite of the fishing limit dispute. Two ships made more than £38,000 for single voyages to Iceland and many have made £27,000. (Times, 24th September.)

# RATS IN

## THE

### EAST-END

Despite constant attacks on the living standards of the working class, HEATH insists that the working class is better off now than ever before. Whilst beef and fresh food is disappearing from many working class families' dinner tables, living conditions get rapidly worse. One example of the bad housing conditions of the working class came to light recently - but was of course played down by the national press. Recently a block of flats in East London has been invaded by rats.

The rats - many over two feet long - have taken over in Wentworth Street, Stepney, and play among the young children in the playground area of the flats. A woman resident said "The place is absolutely infested with them. They roam around the playground, even during the day while the kids are there. They just trot around with their babies and are not frightened of anything. It makes me feel awful just to see them. Many of the people in the block are terrified to go outside by themselves and the kids bunch up together as they play because of the fear of the rats."

A dentist living in the block is worried about the health situation and has warned of a serious risk of typhoid. Dental surgeon Neil McLeod said, "I'm very concerned about it. I have seen at least ten or twenty rats running about in the playground. There is a serious medical risk here. If one of the rats bites a child or enters his flat after treading where the rats have been, there is a big risk of typhoid - it could contaminate the whole area."

Residents pointed out, that although they have complained to Tower Hamlets Council and officers have come and looked around the flats, nothing has been done to get rid of the rats. The council when asked were officially "Looking into it."



TEH HEATH - CYNICAL EFFORT  
IN HIS ANNOUNCEMENTS OF  
GENEROSITY



# RENT: LEGALISED

When the Housing Finance Act came into force last October, 1972, many thousands of tenants across Britain organised to withhold the rent increases it imposed, particularly in the North West and Midlands, new Tenants Action Groups were set up, and on several estates on Merseyside, tenants went on total rent strike. The present housing strategy of the State represents an attack intended to fundamentally sweep away all the gains made in housing by the working class since the First World War.

## THE LAST FIFTY YEARS - CLASS BACKGROUND, STATE BACKLOG

In 1915, working class resistance to paying rapidly rising rents to private landlords, who were profiteering from the wartime housing shortage, threatened to become a mass political struggle and to halt munitions production on Clydeside. The State intervened and froze rents to pre-war levels, promising 'homes for heroes' after the War. Ever since, the State has remained the sole producer of working class housing for rent.

For fifty years housing policy has been locally administered, and Labour councils have been able to keep rents low by adding subsidies from the rates to subsidies from Central Government. This has been one of the enduring bases for electoral support for Labour councils, but it has also meant that struggles against rent levels have been localised by the ruling class, and that sectional working class interests of private tenants, council tenants and owner occupiers have been encouraged to develop.

However one effect of 50 years of municipal housing has been the steady increasing indebtedness of local councils. For, as the costs of land, capital and labour rose, the resistance to paying higher rents has remained, particularly among working class council tenants of State housing. As a result rents ceased to represent an adequate return on capital for the capitalist State .... and increasingly money was borrowed to pay debts on debts.

## THE GLC RENT STRIKE

In 1967, the Tories gained control of the Greater London Council, the biggest public landlord in Europe, and introduced a 'Fair Rents' scheme - a big rent increase offset by means tested rent rebates. GLC tenants in estates in East London mainly, sent the rebate forms back to County Hall in coffins and burnt them on the steps, and they withheld the increase from October 1968.

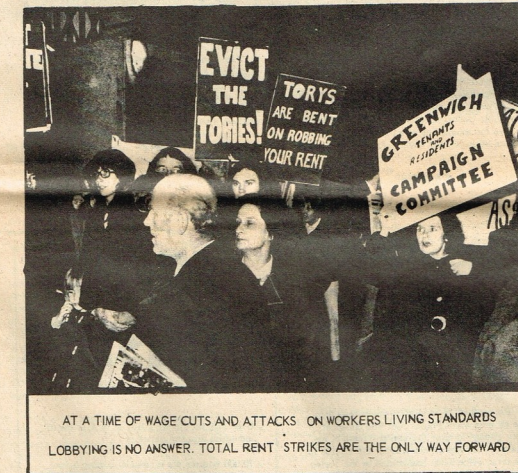
The tenants waged a militant, defensive struggle; excluding Labour and Communist Party influence to contain the struggle to pressure politics. The strike reached a decisive point in early 1969. A massive march on the Hampstead home of the then Minister of Housing, Greenwood, was met by brutal police attacks. Having bypassed the GLC, tenants were confronted with the State, police and courts. For the first time, they drew the support of organised workers, who recognised the class violence of the police, and helped form anti-eviction squads to defeat further direct attacks on the tenants. The State took the initiative of freezing further rent rises nationally. The respectable elements within the tenants movement turned to the courts, to protest the 'illegal' of the rent rises, rather than going on total rent strike. This retreat to 'legalistic' struggle enabled the Labour Party and Communist Party to get a foot back in the door of the tenants movement.

Without a class perspective to identify these developments, tenants rapidly withdrew from the strike-half victorious and half defeated. The State drew its own lessons. The Housing Finance Act contains some of these. The result of this defeat has made London tenants, GLC and Borough alike, unwilling to fight again on the limited demands

of that struggle, although this has not affected the refusal to pay increased rents. As evidenced by soaring arrears levels in Eastern London. It is the conscious, adequate political expression of that refusal that is missing.

## LIFE UNDER THE WARFARE STATE

In 1970, the decline of British capital's international position was accelerating into crisis. The solution resorted to by the ruling class, through the Tory government, has been an all out offensive against the standard of living of the working class. The main form of support the State has given to this policy is to cut back State spending, through dismantling altogether some areas of the welfare state - school milk, prescriptions, etc. They also introduced legislation to force working people to pay more and more of the rest of the social bill. The Housing Finance Act is one of the main planks in this policy.



## CAPITALIST PRIORITIES

The capitalist priorities underlying this Act are many sided. Driving up rent levels nationally, it puts the entire cost of working class housing on the backs of working class tenants, rather than offset by general taxation. In the past, local authorities had the ability to secure working class support through low rents. This made it worth while for tenants to stay in low cost housing, even if there were no jobs in their area. Central government aims to increase the mobility of labour, driving workers out of areas of declining and unprofitable industry to areas where Capital prefers to invest. This being predominantly in the South East, near transport links, on cheap land outside the cities, at low rates. The means tested rebate system is aimed to subsidise the rents of lower paid workers, out of the rents of the higher paid workers. The poor must remain in the inner city. They are essential to the running of the rapidly declining city services, like transport, and hospitals. In London, the government estimate that eventually 80% of London council tenants will need rebates.

## WHEN YOUR LANDLORD'S YOUR BOSS - MUNICIPAL WORKERS & THE RENT

The rebates are intended as wage subsidies, keeping low paid public and private sector workers down; the other side of making state housing 'profitable' is to use rents to serve as an extra subsidy to local services - garbage collection, transport, road maintenance, etc - in the face of local government workers' wage demands, and soaring inflation which threatens to eat up the same local government funds - drawn from state grants, (general taxation), rates and rents. Councils are forced to put their rent surpluses into their rate account, as well as recently increasing the proportion of rates paid by working class tenants. Either way it comes out of workers' pockets. This is accompanied by the rationalisation of maintenance workers. In 1968 as well as putting up the rents, the GLC cut its maintenance workers by 1,500 pressing ahead with work-study, speed up and bonus and productivity schemes. This

country are owner-occupied, and the State is prepared to subsidise this through low-star mortgages, option mortgages, 100% mortgages and tax concessions. For the low paid, who are being made increasingly dependant on the rebates, the prospect is council estate ghettos, graded and starved of maintenance according to the wages of the tenants.

In recent months the credit crisis has forced the State to push up interest rates, pushing up mortgage rates in turn. They leave owner occupiers with a choice between £2 or £4 a week rise in mortgage payments, or indefinite repayments - more than ever mortgages become a form of glorified rent. Since higher paid tenants have compared their rent increases with the rising cost of mortgages, and found staying put a better deal, the strategy of replacing them with tenants off the waiting lists has collapsed. The planned cutbacks in council house building have simply accelerated the shortage of working class housing, while private estates are empty of buyers.

## THE LABOUR PARTY - YOUR LIFE IN THEIR HANDS CLAY CROSS ON THEIR ROSETTES

The Labour Party, which has traditionally relied on local social issues, particularly housing, to gain working class support, has been thrown into crisis as it can no longer act as the political intermediary between the working class and ruling class interests.

For many tenants who have been fighting the increased rents, the collapse of the local Labour councils after all their election promises has come as a profound political disillusion. In many places the local Labour Council has actively opposed 'illegal' actions by tenants, and are in the forefront of serving notices to quit and attachment of earnings orders (which avoid mobilisations around evictions), while telling tenants to put their faith in a future Labour government. The exception, Clay Cross, despite the pro-working class policies of its council, has served to maintain left Labour illusions nationally. Kirkby Council sent cash to Clay Cross, while serving eviction notices on the tenants of Tower Hill estate. What Clay Cross represents is the rapidly disappearing possibility of Councils being closely enough in the control of the working class of a town to become a means to enact working class policies. The Reorganisation of Local Government Act operative from 1974, centralising all social policies, like housing, while decentralising administrative functions, reducing councils to statutorily controlled landlords, will remove such exceptional situations. Opposition from Labour councillors to this reorganisation of the role of local councils, the first this century, has been even more non-existent than resistance to the Housing Finance Act. It is not entirely unconnected with the fact that future councilors will be paid upwards of £5 a meeting by their masters in Westminster, out of our rent and rates.

## TRADES UNIONS OF TENANTS - A JACK JONES ON EVERY ESTATE ? A BRANCH OFFICIAL IN EVERY HOME

As we have seen, the rising rents and deteriorating conditions on council estates are different sides of the same 50p coin. There is no likelihood that conditions will improve with the rising rents, and this is cause for political concern to the State. After the GLC rent strike they realised that annual garden competitions were not enough, and the numerous voluntary and official State agencies in London began rapidly pressing for more 'effective channels of communication' between tenants and the authorities. Within three years, nearly every borough, as well as the GLC, has set up assorted Consultative arrangements with officially recognised Tenants Associations, to attempt to

## OWNER OCCUPATION - A STAKE IN THE SYSTEM OR A STAKE ON THE H.P. THE SCREW TIGHTENS

This Act is not just a question of rent rises. The rebate system also keeps low paid workers and higher paid workers split up. The higher rents are intended to drive higher paid workers into owner-occupation: "A fairer choice between owning a house and renting one". Every government aims to extend the 'Property owning democracy', especially into the working class. Regular mortgage payments and a vested interest in your 'own' castle, tends to undermine class solidarity. The threat to the individual worker and his family, of defaulting on mortgage repayments across a disincentive to collective strike action. Now over half the homes in this



# THEFT

damp down the explosive effects generated by the State's class housing policy, and divert tenants' attention away from the class nature of their housing situation, in particular to split apart the question of rents and conditions. Official support for Tenants Associations as the Trades Unions of council tenants' demonstrates that what the State most fears is the generalised class solidarity that comes when council tenants look beyond the immediate situation as council tenants to squatters, private tenants and homeless, as sharing a common class struggle around housing and rents. The development of Neighbourhood councils, Parish councils, etc, has the same purpose: to fill a dangerous political vacuum created by the reorganisation of the State structure.

## SECTIONAL INTEREST OR CLASSWIDE PERSPECTIVES ?

So long as council tenants oppose the Act from the point of view of defending their position as council tenants, when the ruling class, through the Act, is attacking the wage and rent situation of the entire working class whether paying rent to private landlords, councils or housing associations, there will be little possibility of attack being beaten back. The State is prepared for sectional struggles, turning workers against non-wage workers, tenants against owner-occupiers, rent payers against non-rent payers (tenants in arrears, rent striking, squatting), aiming to exploit these divisions through its policies, particularly the rebate system. Rather than abandoning such a radical offensive as the Housing Finance Act in the face of Official Trades Union demands for a rent freeze, the State has increased the means tested allowance three times already since the Act was introduced.

On a class wide social issue such as housing and rents, there is great potential for breaking through the divisions that keep the working class fragmented. But only by fighting to include all working class people in this struggle - children, old age pensioners, claimants, housewives, as well as trade unionists, and extending the fight from the tenants to private tenants, squatters and even owner-occupiers, entering the factories and municipal depots, and demanding support and industrial action at shopfloor level - as a defence of working class living standards as a whole - on the class-wide basis of the struggle be developed. We are not talking about the 'broad unity of the Labour Movement', including its political parasites and trades union bureaucracies, but the basis of an independent working class politics. When tenants in Hackney, whose rent arrears have doubled since last October, turned to support local squatters encouraging them to occupy empty council flats, the Labour council immediately attempted to split such an alliance by voting to hold back the October rent increase for council tenants, while simultaneously declaring 'all-out war on the squatters'. This demonstrates that behind the militant left wing stand of Hackney council, is a strategy of divide and rule over the working class, to maintain its political power. Last week it meekly reversed this 'fighting

stand', after two months of militant posturing, but their war against the squatters, mostly homeless working class families, goes on.

## 12 MONTHS LATER, FIFTY YEAR OLD QUESTIONS STILL TO BE ANSWERED

A year after the last conference, another National tenants conference was held in Manchester, in September. It was called by tenants Action Groups, with the support of the International Socialists. Although more tenants were joining in witholding the new increases, the rent strikes have been sustained by a hard core of active tenants rather than the thousands who took action at the beginning.

While there is no doubting the militancy of those who have been fighting, nor their determination to smash the Act, the struggles have been fought on a narrow basis of defence against the increases, organised within the estates, and expecting support from the working class 'outside' the estate through the Trades Unions. Tenants who have been able to sustain a total rent strike - on Tower Hill in Kirkby, Merseyside - have been able to overcome some of the divisive effects of the Act by refusing rebates and withholding all rent (and rates), and significantly, they were the only tenants to raise the demand of Rent Free Housing at the conference. However, if total rent strike remains the necessary form of struggle, the reason for this is less that it 'hits the Tories in the pocket', than that it is the only demand that can unite all sections of working class tenants, whatever their landlord, around a revolutionary perspective of class struggle. For it attacks the sanctity of the rent relationship, one of the pillars of the private ownership of the means of production, of capitalist society.

The difficulties tenants were expressing were less that they had been sold out by the Labour council or that they did not know that 'rent rise is a wage cut', than in finding the political direction of the rent struggles. Some took it back to the Labour Party, despite all its weaknesses, others called for more militancy.

The answer of the I.S. is to combine tenants action groups and shop stewards committees, and set up a national action committee to co-ordinate separate struggles through the bulletin, to fight a broad front campaign for lower rents. As this article has indicated, since the question is not just one of lower rents, but who will exercise power over the standard of living and social needs of the working class, such proposals cannot answer the political questions posed by the rent struggle to the working class.

I.S. is fighting to restore the set-up before the Fair Rents Act came in. At a time when the ruling class simply doesn't have the money to do this, even such a demand directly challenges its power. The bosses understand this clearly. Unless workers do also, we will be defeated. The development of the total rent strike has the potential for a much more conscious confrontation, as a statement that the working class refuses to acknowledge the right of the bosses to organise housing. Without this consciousness it still represents more than the partial rent strike: but it is not enough.

It is only around tenants action groups and shop steward committees that such a battle can be rallied, because these are the organs of workers' struggle at this stage. It is they that develop through struggle and historically confront the power of the bosses

For further information, or copies of the pamphlet - 'From the GLC Rent Strike to the Housing Finance Act', (12p each plus 3p post) - write to:

East London Anti-Rent Group,  
7, Queensgate Villas,  
Victoria Park Rd., London E.9.

# HOSPITAL WORK - the struggle goes on

Throughout the hospital workers' strike the Union bureaucracies played the usual role of stooges of the bosses within the working class movement. Most important of all was NUPE (National Union of Public Employees) - the main union involved. Faced with spreading action, a rising tide of militancy and the growing understanding that the strike was a power struggle with the government, government and Unions came together and produced a 'solution' - a referral to the Pay Board.

As far as the press, television and radio are concerned, this was the end of it. In fact the struggle continued in a large hospital region - Wessex - which covers Dorset, Wiltshire and Hampshire. It also continued at a hospital in London - the Brook in South East London.

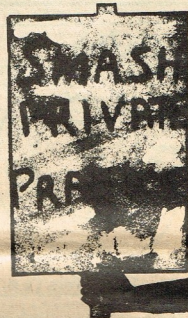
In Wessex the Joint Shop Stewards ban on private patients was brought into action on the first day of the strike, during March 1973. The private patients were conveniently in their own wards. So the ban was carried out by simply closing the wards for 10 weeks. For unclear reasons, the wards were reopened on the understanding that they would be run by non-union labour (negotiated scabbing?). Later other unions, like COHSE (Confederation of Health Service Employees), helped provide the wards with staff. NUPE members were left to carry on the ban by themselves, although their union refused to make the strike official. In spite of the fact that the union conference has voted the abolition of treatment of private patients on the National Health, NUPE has refused to support actions aimed at this. The bureaucracy says its a political decision and must therefore be fought for in the Labour Party.

The struggle came to a head in mid-July. Theatre porters at a hospital in Portsmouth were issued with threats of dismissal. By the end of the day over 200 workers from three hospitals in the city had come out in support. The strike ended when the notices were withdrawn.

A week later, the Joint Shop Stewards Committee withdrew the ban on private patients. It claimed that it was impossible to

One person alone apparently knew that both bans were going on at the same time - a member of the IMG. Why did he not pass the information on and put the workers in touch with each other?

At the Brook Hospital, the official strike itself only lasted a week. Feeling was solid in any case against private practice on the National Health. The two Branch Secretaries involved introduced the ban as a way of continuing action after the strike itself had ended. They have kept it on ever since, though the bureaucrats are working hard to end it, by actions including manipulating Union meetings. Combined with the now complete isolation of the Brook, it is all too likely the union bureaucrats will succeed. Again a stewards committee was set up, as in Portsmouth. But unlike there, the ban only removed the special privileges of private patients within hospital - special food, unlimited phone calls, special domestic services etc. It did not in any sense stop them jumping the queue.



The lessons at Brook were more profound. The attack on private patients in the NHS was linked to a call for a socialist government. However illusory this aim, it represents a step forward from an analysis which opposes private patients but offers nothing. At the same time it deflects the struggle, mirroring in its own way the NUPE leadership opting for working through the Labour Party. Just as the call to pressure the Union Executive into action deflects from the only available form of successful struggle - the building of shop steward combines across the health service.

Private patient bans have not been raised only as a principled move. Given the anxiety of consultants for the extra pay-offs, they also represent a very good tactical which divides the bosses and enables gains to be made. Unless during these tactical uses, the questions of principle are raised, however, they can lead nowhere.

The private patient ban begins the assault on the myth, in the health services, that the bosses can decide everything that happens. The NHS was created to benefit workers. Instead we are being pushed back by que-jumping private patients. Even defending gains is a question of power. Are we prepared to give up what we have won? We only begin to secure our gains when we administer them ourselves. Banning private patients, stating that the NHS should belong to the workers, is a clear start to this.

We as taxpayers churn out £15 million a year to support a rapid, cushy service for the fat bastards who live off our labour every day of our lives. And to subsidise the growth of schemes advertised as giving workers an interest in capitalism, and bridging bosses and workers - another of the illusions they throw up to fool us, which we pay for. (Like the junkie paying for his heroin.) Since the war only four new hospitals have been built. The newest of these cost £16 million. The savings on school milk, which resulted in the outbreak of rickets after years of its supposed disappearance, was a mere £9 million.

There is evidently only one way of finally preventing these absurd priorities. It is when the working class takes over society.

NUPE Member





# LIBERTARIAN COMMUNIST REVIEW.

Revolutionary Anarchist Quarterly.

No. 1. Now available.

## IN THIS ISSUE :-

Anarcho-syndicalism & council communism

Building the Vanguard ?

The Wage Freeze

Secularism

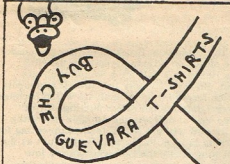
plus REVIEWS

PRICE 15p. Available from L.C.R., 277, Kingsway Park, Davyhulme, Manchester.

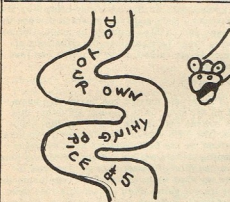
## snake



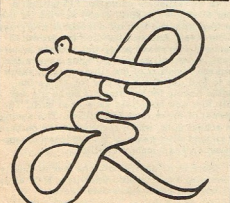
AH ME, I'VE TWISTED...



I'VE TURNED...



BUT WHAT EVER I DO....



THEY SAY I'M IN IT FOR THE MONEY.

## part one.

From 1867 to 1918 Hungary was a partner in the Dual Monarchy of Austria-Hungary, under the Habsburg Emperor in Vienna. The Empire consisted of many different nationalities - Germans, Magyars, Poles, Czechs, Croats and others. By the end of the First World War in Autumn 1918 the Empire, which had fought on the side of Germany, had collapsed. The various nationalities declared their independence and Emperor Franz Joseph fled his capital. One of his last official acts was to appoint as Prime Minister of Hungary, one of that country's richest landowners, Count Mihaly Karolyi.

Karolyi, though a member of the feudal aristocracy which ruled the country, was something of a liberal, he believed in Hungarian independence and limited "democratic" reforms.

When he was appointed Prime Minister this was confirmed by General D'Esperay whose Allied army was occupying Budapest. For the time being his appointment suited both the Allied and Austro-German interests, since it

made gestures towards reforms whilst keeping power in "responsible" hands. This was vitally important at a time when, all over Europe, workers and peasants were looking to the example of the Russian Revolution, when Germany was in the throes of Revolution (see Libertarian Struggle no. 8), when British and French troops mutinied against both the senseless slaughter and the system which had caused the war.

As happened in Germany, the first prop of the ruling class in Hungary was the Social Democratic Party. They provided the only element of popular support for the Karolyi government which had alienated the medieval landowners by its vague promises to the peasants of land reform, and which had no support in the small Hungarian working class which wanted no compromise with their class enemy. Even one with a soft voice and a smile on his face.

Lacking support, the Karolyi government

survived on the interests of the Allied and Austro-German ruling classes. When these interests diverged it fell, and in falling ceased to be the obstacle to open class conflict it was created to be. When France set about creating a series of client states in Eastern Europe both to threaten Germany from the East (thus posing Germany a war on two fronts in any future conflict with France) and to "contain the Bolshevik infection", she inspired their dismemberment of Hungary which soon lost 3/5 of its territory to the French client states - Rumania, Czechoslovakia, Serbia, Yugoslavia.

The area of the state was shrinking daily. The landowners blocked any move towards land reform, the railway system (there was no road system to speak of) had collapsed.

The Karolyi government fell, the Social Democrats were also paralysed, Power fell into the only hands willing to take it - the small, barely formed Hungarian Communist Party led

## THE LABOUR PARTY

The three bourgeois parties have met to discuss the programmes that they will offer to the British people in the coming election. The joyful Liberals see the possibility of the disillusioned voters of the Tory middle ground giving them the balance of power, while the despondent Tories at their conference see little prospect for a future victory, causing the antagonisms within their ranks to become even deeper.

The Tory leadership turned to attack the newly discovered danger of Enoch Powell, for the right-wing of the party had started to threaten the unlikely "socialists" Ted Heath, Barber and Carr. Barber played the role of Heath's hatchet man and accused Powell of possessing "all the hallmarks of a fanatic", to growing cries of shame from the rank and file delegates at the Blackpool conference. While Thorpe still continues to collect the very votes that were given to Heath in 1970.

But what of the party to which the mass of the working class, formally through its unions and informally through the ballot-box, owes its allegiance - the Labour Party? What radical manifesto does Harold Wilson push forward as the way to solve the present and ever developing economic crisis that threatens to take from the working class its democratic rights and present living standards?

The Labour Party has revealed at its conference by all its machinations, evasions and retreats, the policies by which it will lead the working class to a defeat that will leave it tied hand and foot in its battles with the employers in future years. Behind all the concern and rhetoric (not shared by the last Labour government) for the rights of free collective bargaining, stable council house rents and the maintenance of the level of expenditure on Education and the Social Services, can be clearly seen the backdoor that leads to complete collaboration with the demands of a profit hungry bourgeoisie.

Wilson and Healey clearly outlined their respect for the wishes of the conference which saw the solution to the present situation in "public ownership". These notions for nationalisation, passed or unpassed by conference, were to be ignored as Wilson stated: "...the parliamentary committee, charged by the constitution with the duty of sitting down with the Executive to select, from the programme adopted by conference, the items for including in the election manifesto, entirely reserves its full constitutional rights on the matter."

He meant to say, "Me and my mates will do as we please and all you rate workers can go and get stuffed." It also means that any thing Wilson promises now or prior to an election can be taken with a pinch of salt. He



The role of the so-called 'lefts', Scamilton, Jones, Foot and Benn, was to deliberately oppose or confuse any attempts that would have openly revealed Wilson's role. Scamilton 'remitted' the AUEW's motion for ending talks with the Tories so that no vote could be taken, Benn stating "we are not the party of confiscations" (the only way the working class gains control), Foot helping the anti-common market motion to be thrown out; all these examples show clearly that the lefts stand with Wilson. Meanwhile the Clay Cross constituency were not allowed to speak to conference on the progress of the parties' principal stand against the Fair Rents Act. can use any policy and 'constitutionally' owe no responsibility to the party conference.

Many groups on the left still urge 'support for the lefts' and 'fight within the party to change it'. This conference cannot leave a single doubt in any sensible mind as to the stupidity of these slogans. But even more dangerous are the slogans from the left that are going to be pushed forward during the run-up to the next election. The working class will be asked to support slogans for a 'Labour government pledged to socialist policies' or 'vote Labour with no illusions' and many other phrases calling for partial or critical support for the Labour Party. All of these slogans hang on one idea, that a Labour government will be easier dealt with in a period of crisis than any other party. The idea does not take into account the greatest danger that is sure to develop when the government turns to smash the living standards of the working class - the danger of coalition.

Coalition is the method by which the bourgeoisie unites all its political forces for the sole purpose attacking and annihilating

the organized resistance of the working class to its economic policies. It will occur at the particular time when the economy has developed to a critical level of high inflation, low investment, competing high interest rates and an unstable stock market - the period in which British capitalism is existing now. Any election in this period will show a marked tendency for the traditional parties to unite on a programme 'to save the nation' and demand sacrifices from only one section of society - the working class.

Wilson outlined his thought on the matter at the conference: "As long as I am leader of this party there will be no electoral treaty, no political alliance, no understanding, no deal, no arrangement, no fix. Neither will there be any secret deal or discussions."

For some reason it seems that Wilson had already been spoken to concerning offers of coalition, and he felt he had to speak out against it, but it is well known that Wilson's statements change overnight, especially if you have the get-out clause to select from the Labour programme as you please.

It is highly possible that the Liberals will hold the balance of power at the next election, and there will be many Taverines, Jenkinsites and other rightists within the Labour Party who will clamour for united action between the two parties. The united action will take the form of a statutory wage freeze that will be much tougher than the Tories' effort.

It will be necessary to point out very clearly to the working class that 'its' party will be well prepared to turn traitor and join with the Liberals, and it is vital that the next election must not be used to give any support to the Labour Party led by Harold Wilson.

It will be necessary to prepare for the fight against a unified parliament - and mobilising support for the Labour Party can only lead to disillusionment and despair as the party turns sharp right. Slogans in the next election must be abstentionist and calling for militant organised action:-

DON'T VOTE - PREPARE TO FIGHT  
DON'T VOTE - ORGANIZE  
DON'T VOTE TORY, WHETHER WILSON,  
THORPE OR HEATH.

ALL GOVERNMENTS ARE ANTI-WORKER  
Only by carefully explaining and exposing the role of the labour party to the working class can any progress be made to building a revolutionary anarchist alternative in the Labour Movement. It cannot be done by first insisting we vote Labour.

Bob Campbell



# 1919

by Bela Kun. On 20th March, 1919, he was a prisoner in Budapest's Marko utca jail, where he was receiving the customary beatings. On 21st March the public prosecutor himself released the prisoner in a suitably grovelling manner. On 22nd March he was Commissar of Foreign Affairs of the Hungarian Soviet Republic and actual head of the government.

The small Hungarian working class did far more than liberate its militants. The hastily formed Red Army (the old National Army of officers and peasant-boy rankers fell apart) threw back invading Rumanian and Czechoslovak armies.

Allied encouragement and aiding of the invaders grew stronger as the Revolution took hold. Life stirred again in Budapest, production, stagnant for months, grew again as the workers' councils assumed control.

The Hungarian Workers Republic added to the pace of the revolution in Europe. When the news reached Munich, Bavaria was proclaimed a Soviet Republic (see Libertarian Struggle no. 8). The Allies hastened to crush the spread of working class power. On their side, the revolutionaries sent agitators to Bulgaria, Austria and Rumania. Whilst encouraging Hungary's invaders, the Allies sent a 'fact-finding' mission to Hungary, headed by General Smuts. The mission lasted two days and resulted in nothing.

To be continued

K.N.

# TESTING TIME FOR TEACHERS

When the government refused to award the £300 allowance to London teachers earlier this year it was clear that they still thought that teachers in general would think 'well, that is a bit mean of Mrs. Thatcher but we'll stick to the profession as it is a worthwhile career etc.etc.' 20,000 teachers out on strike and the biggest London white-collar Trade Union march ever had little impact. The refusal of the award and the refusal of the union to pursue a militant line was the last straw for many. Coupled with bad conditions in schools, and poor housing, significant numbers of teachers resigned their posts and left. There is now an acute staffing shortage in London concentrated in the sectors of Secondary Education and in Special Schools ('maladjusted and ESN'). Many people who left were experienced teachers who had held posts of responsibility. In London the costs of keeping a family, even if you are a head of department, is difficult.

The shortage in secondary schools is more severe in working class areas. Some school departments (such as English) may be fully staffed and this can disguise the shortage. For example, the headmaster interested in keeping a mythical school unit can point to the total average of pupils per staff member in the school and the statistics can be made to look very good; but this may



TEACHERS ON STRIKE

cover over the fact that there is no technical drawing taught and just one maths teacher, and that a large section of the school may be timetable so that child receive no Art lessons. A theology student on supply may be teaching maths. The examples are too numerous.

Some reactionary headmasters are blaming the higher school leaving age. This obviously is a red herring. The extra jobs are there but the obvious fact remains that the pay in London is too low to attract an adequate number of staff.

Many schools have gone on part time teaching. The present teaching population in London schools is annoyed because of the situation and their feelings are becoming expressed in the form of calls for militant action by the two teaching unions, the NUT and NAS. In many schools the two unions are co-operating. London NUT Associations have set up action committees and the Inner London Teachers Association (ILTA) central council have passed a militant motion supporting individual NUT members who refuse to cover classes where there is no teacher. This decision was

bureaucratically overruled by the N.U.T.

Executive, who ordered that two thirds of the NUT membership in a school must agree on an action before the union would give support. As stated, shortages only affect a few departments in a school and the executive knew that a two thirds majority would be difficult to obtain, and instituted the ruling to head off militancy.

## VICTIMISATION

The ILTA council voted to support, on full strike pay, a victimised union member, Dorothy Mcelgan, who had been moved from school three times in the last four years until this year when she had refused to be moved once again. The Council demanded that she be given the assigned post in a definite school that was promised to her and had been taken away. The Local Education Authority moved her for holding 'unacceptable views'. She was an NUT Rank and File supporter (an alliance of socialist militants in the NUT).

Individual Rank and File groups have worked hard in their local associations, but against the R&F conveners have as yet refused to call an All London Meeting to coordinate action. Will the IS leadership of R&F ever show any militancy in the face of victimisation by Education Authority and Union alike?

Several NUT London Associations, including Newham and East London, have passed motions calling for a £500 London allowance. Although this is a step forward for London, teachers must relate their claims to demands for a high national award, or action could become isolated in London.

Under Tory phase 3 proposals London teachers might get a rise in their London allowance although the award will be a long way below what is demanded. Increasing inflation will have neutralized the effect of the rise by the time it is made. This will bring forward the call from teachers for a higher basic rate of pay to keep up their dwindling living standards.

The union members must fight for links with other workers, on a national level, in the form of joint Action Committees, and solidarity and sympathy strikes. Rank and File union members must see the necessity for such links, especially in the public sector since the government always tries to control its own workers before it tackles those in private industry. Before these demands can be won the Rank and File membership must understand the role of its backward Union leadership, and defeat all its bureaucratic measures to prevent the taking of militant action. The first step in that struggle is to democratise the N.U.T.

## MIDDLE EAST

Next time you're reading a newspaper or watching the news and the Arab-Israeli conflict comes up, then just remember that:

- 3 million Arab refugees have been created since the Israeli state was created in 1947.
- Since 1947 thousands of dispossessed Palestinians have been rotting in refugee camps in places like the Gaza Strip on the borders of Israel.
- The Israeli state was set up by America and the western powers, not to atone for Nazi atrocities against the Jews, but to have a friendly state willing to protect western oil interests in a hostile Arab world.
- That because of this need the possibility of a multiracial state of Arabs and Jews was smashed.
- That although the subsequent 'pure' Zionist state was initially very small in the immediate years after its creation, the western powers heavily subsidised ruthless Israeli territorial expansion.
- That the present size (post 1967) of Greater Israel is only a logical extension of these expansionist policies.
- That Zionism has always worked to divide Arab and Israeli working class in the interests of imperialism.

NO WAR BUT THE CLASS WAR

### PRESS FUND

HELP 'LIBERTARIAN STRUGGLE' TO GROW.

- criticise and suggest ways to improve the paper.
- write for the paper.
- sell the paper.
- give a donation to the Press Fund.

All donations will be acknowledged. Cheques and POs should be made out to 'ORA General Fund' Send to Press Fund, 29 Cardigan Rd, Leeds 6.

## ORA

### groups & contact addresses

If you think that the direct control by working people over all aspects of their lives is worth fighting for.

If you think that what's needed now is independent rank and file organisation linking all aspects of working class struggle - in housing, schools, women's rights, in work, and all others.

If you think that the independence of these organisations must be defended from takeover by the Labour traitors, union bureaucracies, and the 'NEW leaderships' If you think that an organisation is needed which fights for revolutionary politics in everyday struggles but has no intention of seizing power for itself.

THEN, JOIN THE ORA!  
LOCAL GROUPS.

Glasgow: Gordon Sykes, 32 Queen Elisabeth Square, Glasgow C3.

Hull: Marion McCartney, 13 Collman Street, Hull.

Lancaster: Joe Thornberry, 56 Norfolk Street, Lancaster.

York: Neil Hunt, 24 Moss Street, York.

Leeds: Trevor Savage, Flat 3, 35 Richmond Road, Leeds 6.

Manchester: Les Smith, 277 Kingsway Park, Davyhulme, Umston, Manchester.

North London: Doug Durrant, 68a Chingford Road, London E. 17.

There are also contacts in: Andover, Birmingham, Colchester, Dundee, Edinburgh, Harlech, Liverpool, West, East and South London, Newcastle, Norwich, Oxford, Poole, Reading and Swansea. If you want to be put in touch, write to Terry Green, at the York Group address.

### LIBERTARIAN STUDENTS' FEDERATION?

Anyone interested in "a Student Federation within ORA, mainly those involved in Union work"?

Write to Larry Law, Berks Coll. of Ed. Students' Union, Bulmershe Court, Woodlands Avenue, Edey, Reading, Berkshire. READING RG6 6QG.

### 'THE WORKERS ARE REVOLTING'



# sub- scribe

Subscription £1 for 12 issues

NAME

ADDRESS

Make out POs/Cheques to 'ORA' 29, Cardigan Road Leeds 6.



# CHRYSLER



The strike by electricians at Chrysler's Ryton and Stoke plants is now well into its third month. The strike was, at first, an attempt to force the Chrysler management to cough up the £250 per year increase in wages that the electricians claim the management promised them last February. The management stalled the electricians, knowing that their friends in Parliament would back them up by enforcing the State pay laws. These laws make it a crime for workers to strike for a decent standard of living. A crime for which workers can be jailed.

The Pay Board, set up by the Tories to supervise this attack on the standard of living of the working class, quickly came to the aid of the Chrysler management, by ruling that the £250 per year increase was illegal. The electricians, however, refused to back down and remained on strike. The Chrysler management realised that they would have to use other tactics to break the strike. They instructed non-union labour to do the jobs of the striking electricians. This caused many workers all over the Midlands to protest and threaten solidarity strike action. The workers at Chrysler's Linwood plant in Scotland struck in protest at the management's action, and refused to scab on the strike.

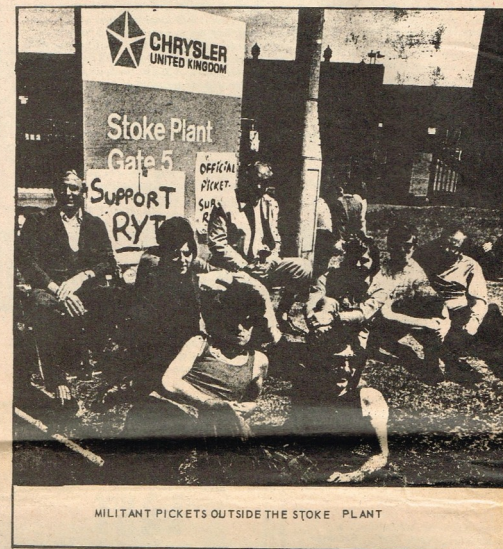
All this time the leaders of the Unions involved were scurrying about in the background. Frank Chapple, well known 'red-baiter', secretary of the EEP TU (the electricians' Union) was continually denying that his Union was trying to fight the law and blindly maintained that it was a dispute between the management and the workers. It was only after two months of pressure from the striking

electricians that Chapple was forced to back the strike. The 'dynamic duo', Jack Jones (secretary of the Transport and General Workers Union) and Hugh Scanlon (secretary of the Amalgamated Union of Engineering Workers), so-called 'left' Union leaders, were instructing their members at the Chrysler plants to work 'normally'. This clearly meant scabbing on the strike and working on machines repaired by scab labour. The workers at Ryton grew angry at having to scab on their mates. The shop floor at the Ryton plant was close to boiling point.

## 8,000 REDUNDANT THREAT

At this point the Chrysler management played their 'nasty' card. They threatened to close certain plants, making 8000 workers redundant if the strike did not stop. The management quickly stood back as the 'dynamic duo', Jones and Scanlon, steam-rollered into the battle. Had they at last realised their 'mistake' in scabbing on the strike? Were they at last going to do what should have been done months before - call their members out in solidarity? Were they hell! They ploughed in - on the side of the management.

They used the management's threat of 8000 redundancies as the excuse they needed to go all out to isolate the electricians and break the strike, so as to avoid any fight with the bosses and the Government over the Tory's anti-working class pay laws. This is despite their repeated, verbal, 'opposition' to these laws. They were also trying to avert the threat of rank-and-file union members



MILITANT PICKETS OUTSIDE THE STOKE PLANT

## FOR INFORMATION, ON ORA

### WRITE TO

**24 Moss St.  
York**

### ARTICLES, SUBS, ORDERS

### FOR LIBERTARIAN STRUGGLE TO

**29 Cardigan  
Rd., Leeds 6**

### PUBLIC MEETINGS AND EVENTS

#### MANCHESTER AREA REVOLUTIONARY ANARCHISTS

Fortnightly public meetings  
Thursdays, 8.00 pm.  
Lass O'Gowrie, Charles Street

GLASGOW ORA  
Meet Wednesdays 8.00 pm.  
Iona Community, 144 Clyde Street

LEEDS ORA  
Discussions on meetings  
Contact Group Secretary (see page 7)

## Publications

**Organisational Platform of the Libertarian Communists (ORA)** pamphlet advance orders to D. Young, 91, Burghhead Drive, Linn house, Glasgow.

**The Tyranny of Structurelessness** by Jo Freeman. Obtainable from Leeds Women's ORA, 29, Cardigan Rd., Leeds 6. 5p plus 3p post. 'Libertarians in all movements should study this pamphlet because it contains the core of the argument that ORGANISED libertarians have stated.' Review in April Libertarian Struggle.

**Mole Express** Manchester voice of revolutionary struggle. News/revIEWS/exposes/graphics/features. 10p monthly from 7, Summer Terrace, Manchester. 14 SWD.

**Michael Tobin**, who was jailed for two years being in possession of leaflets calling on British Army soldiers to desert, has been released. He wishes to be contacted by fellow ex-prisoners, or prisoners, to organise a campaign against the British penal system. Contact Michael Tobin, P.O. Box 10638, Amsterdam, Holland.

**De Vrije Socialist** paper of the Dutch Libertarian Socialist Federation. For copies write to: Jan Bervoets, Willem de Zwijgerlaan 104, Den Haag, Netherlands.

**Solidarity**, a paper for militants in industry and elsewhere. 6p. plus post from 123, Latham Road, London, E.6.

**Inside Story** the radical magazine which specialises in the stories Fleet St. won't print. For a sample copy send 25p to Dept. AP 20, 3, Belmont Road, London S.W. 4.

**Front Libertaire** fortnightly paper of O.R.A. France. Sample copy from North London group, subscription details from 33, rue des Vigales, 75020 Paris, France.

taking independent solidarity action, and of course, to get themselves out of the awkward position of being seen to be forcing their members to scab on the strike.

Jones and Scanlon maintained that the management were not bluffing, and that the electricians were endangering 8000 jobs. Regional officers of the AUEW appeared on television saying that the electricians were being 'unreasonable'. The Linwood workers had already resisted attempts by Scanlon to make them give up their principled solidarity strike, but were forced back to work after massive pressure was put on them by the T & GWU, the AUEW, and the Scottish TUC leaderships. Jones and Scanlon have now managed to get an 'independent' inquiry set up. The Linwood workers have, however, pledged support for the Ryton electricians, should the Ryton electricians reject the inquiry's findings. This inquiry is a blatant cover-up job.

All this time the Chrysler management had sat back and let Jones and Scanlon get on with their dirty work for them. The bourgeois press jumped on the situation and stated that the dispute was an inter-union one. With the help of Jones and Scanlon, and the press, the Chrysler management had successfully diverted the fight to an inter-union one, away from the real issue - the Tory attacks on the working class standard of living and the gangster-style tactics of the Chrysler management.

This created widespread confusion and anger on the shop floor. Many workers were angry at Jones and Scanlon for acting as coppers for the Chrysler management, and can see that the actions of the Chrysler management, backed by the Tories, were part of a concerted attempt to break the Trade Unions inside Chrysler. This would not only be disastrous for the Chrysler workers but would be a major body blow to the whole working class.

Jones and Scanlon's actions throughout this strike are consistent with their activities over the past few years. They have promised action against the Tory attacks on the working class, but in practice have bent over backwards to divert any confrontation and to avoid a fight. Since the start of Phase Two of the Tory attack they have settled, in every wage dispute, for the

Tories' £1 plus 4%, which when viewed with the astronomical rise in food prices and the rise in the general cost of living means a cut in wages. They have shown their resolute cowardice and that they are prepared to compromise with the bosses at any price, even if the price is, as in this case, every trade union principle in the book.

## COUNTER - ATTACK

In this strike some of the major problems facing the working class become clear. It is obvious that the Tories are determined to drive the standard of living of the working class down to pre-war levels. They have used their main weapon - the law - to raise rents, freeze wages, outlaw strikes and push up prices, in order to boost the profits of the bosses. A counter-attack by the working class is clearly necessary.

To do this, workers must fight against 'lifetime representatives' and must fight to make all union representatives recallable. The rank and file members of the unions must make all the decisions, and any representative who does not obey these decisions must be recalled. Links between shop floor workers in all industries, and all sections of the working class, must be built. We can see that a small group of workers fighting on their own, no matter how courageous or principled, is at best futile and at worst suicidal. Fear of the law must disappear. Workers must realise that the law is a weapon in the hands of the bosses. We can see that with the attacks on militants all over the country, like the Brewster 24. As one worker said after the 5 dockers were jailed last year: "If the law says they can jail workers for fighting to maintain their standard of living, then we don't recognise their law".

The counter-attack against the Tories and the bosses must be a united, organised one, firmly under the control of shop floor workers.

A. PACKER (TGWU)

Published by ORA, from 29, Cardigan Rd., Leeds 6. Printed by Anyway Ltd, 235 Brixton Rd., London S.W. 9. Tel. 01-874 2423.



No10

DECEMBER 1973

5P

# libertarian struggle



FOR WORKERS POWER

LEN'

MURRAY

## THE GOVERNMENT'S MAN

**INSIDE: BAKERS UNION • ISRAEL •**

**BLACKBURN THREE • RED TAPE •**

**M•E•C DISPUTE • LETTERS**

paper of the Organisation of Revolutionary Anarchists



# HALF-BAKED UNION.

At the last TUC conference a motion was passed to expel twenty-five unions because they failed to deregister under the Industrial Relations Act. One of these was the Bakers Union. Not a great deal is heard about this union - it is not renowned for militancy or action. At one branch at least, the Wonder bakery in Hull, this lack of militancy is fundamentally because most of its members do not realise that they are in a union.

The majority of workers in this bakery are women. The men do the actual baking and although this means they are working next to extremely hot ovens, the work is generally more interesting and skilful - and of course better paid. The women do the packing and work the pastry machines, or (if they are lucky) actually ice and decorate the cakes. There was one woman who did what was normally considered a 'man's' job - she weighed out all the cake and sponge mixtures. This was a semi-skilled job as exact measurements are needed. The man who had the job before her was sacked because he used to take all day to do the day's weighing. She was given the job because she was known to be quick. She therefore felt compelled to do the work as soon as possible which resulted in her finishing at 11.30 a.m. She was then asked to help out in the room where the cakes were decorated. This meant that she was doing the work of two people and getting paid for one - not only that but she got paid less than the man who had held her job previously. Therefore the employer didn't have to employ another person for this room, which was understaffed.

When she asked for a job bonus because she was doing skilled work, she was given it - at the same rate as the other women (a few pence an hour) (once more less than the man). The fact that she didn't get paid the proper rate was doubly unfortunate for her as she was an unsupported mother with two children to keep. She was one of the few women who realised that she was in a union. She noticed that 17p was being deducted from her wages each week and when she enquired about it was told that it was the union fee. She said nothing more about it not knowing who to go to, as no-one knew who the shop steward was.

After hearing this, I enquired further about this 17p deduction and was told that it was compulsory because the bakery was a closed shop. I was told that if I had any complaints about paying my union dues to see the 'union man' - no name was given to this mythical 'union man' nor was he ever given one when further enquiries were made.

Although I had no objection to paying the union dues or to being in a closed shop, I was annoyed that no-one had thought it important enough to tell me (or any of the others) that they were in a union, but had just taken the money. Further enquiries about the union were met with a blank stare. No-one knew who the shop steward was and the union man (who was not the shop steward but one of the management) was never available. When enquiries about union cards were made the answer was 'Nobody has those here, dear'. Incidentally

there was nothing on the wage slip to indicate what the 17p deduction was for, therefore there was no proof that anyone was in the union or paid any union dues.

The Bakers Union and the management have used this closed shop for their own ends. The Union have been spared the trouble of recruiting. The management are happy with the situation because it means that workers' grievances cannot be backed up by shop-floor activity.

In this factory, as in many others, the majority of workers are women. They are either young girls who have been conditioned to think of their jobs as a fill in until they get married and are therefore not interested in the job itself not even to the extent of articulating their complaints. Or they are older married women who generally work part-time and feel that militancy could endanger their jobs, which they desperately need to supplement the family income. This means that they are all working in isolation and this stunts any hope of an active union. Therefore there is an even greater need for a union prepared to back up their complaints against the management and to raise the confidence in their ability to fight for better conditions. What the women in this bakery do not need is a union that sees its role only as a collector of subscriptions from an uninformed and naive membership.

MARION JACOBS

The Bakers Union suffers from the history of the trade. Twenty years ago, the majority of bakeries were attached to local shops and so employed only small numbers of workers. The Union was practically unknown in these 'local' bakeries. The only large-scale employer and centraliser of the workforce was the Co-op. And so, the only workers that saw the need to unionise were employed by an enterprise that 'represented' socialist ideas. The Union was tied to the Co-op and often the Union representative would be a Co-op foreman or supervisor.

Over the succeeding years, the bakeries have been centralised into vast plants, employing upwards of 200 workers. 'Wonderloaf' and 'Jumblest' are produced at the rate of 50,000 loaves per shift. The poor wages and conditions of the work ensure high turnover of staff. By 1970 the Union reported that over a 12 week period 60% of the labour force had left and been replaced in 5 of the biggest plants in the South East because of the 60-hour week and work conditions generally. The 'casual' labour force left the Union administration in the hands of the old no-strike Co-op men and meant that any new force in the Union was impossible to organise. The Union was notorious for its pro-boss attitude and its membership grew very little.

Now that the Bakers Union has been rightly expelled from the TUC, the Bridlington Agreement (over the poaching of members by other unions) no longer applies. Workers in the baking industry can now join a union in which their chance to effectively organise and fight is much better.

KEVIN CALE

## ABOUT 'LIBERTARIAN STRUGGLE'

This paper is written and produced by militants all over the country, who are active in their trade unions, tenants' associations, claimants' unions, women's liberation groups, schools, colleges and universities.

We are united by our membership of the ORA a democratically organised group, which fights for a libertarian communist revolution. This means a revolution brought about, and firmly controlled by, the working class. This is the only foundation for a society in which production is for need, not profit, free from exploitation and oppression.

The only way working class power can express itself, is through workers' councils in the factories and through neighbourhood councils in the communities. Demands for improvement in workers' living standards, whether wages, better housing, etc. are not purely economic demands. The working class must make each demand a move towards the control of production and the control of their own lives. Therefore every organisation and struggle of the working class must be directly and democratically controlled by the workers involved. Consequently we oppose all groups and parties who take the initiative and control from the working class.

As part of our attempt to put this kind of politics into practice, we have rotating editorship of each issue of this paper. We produce the paper (none of us are professional journalists) to provide one means of spreading some hidden facts, of publicising what workers are thinking and doing, to workers in other industries, and other parts of the country, to talk about what claimants, women, immigrants, pensioners and school-kids are doing, and to show how these battles can be united.

We won't give you the familiar shit about, "this is your paper". What we do say is: -USE this paper, -pass on what you've learnt, -contact others in a similar situation.

We know that lots of people have no practice at writing articles - but who needs literary genius? An essential factor in the development of the working class movement is the communication of details and the lessons of its various struggles.

The editorial group producing this paper wish to state that signed articles do not necessarily represent national ORA policy.

WORKERS' POWER - NO SUBSTITUTE!

As far as British justice is concerned, the case of the Blackburn 3 was closed on Monday October 22nd when the three accused - Sean Colley, Michael Kneafsey and Patrick McCabe - pleaded guilty to all charges.

The charges were:

Colley: Possession of explosive devices  
Conspiracy to cause explosions  
Sentence - 4 years in prison

Kneafsey: Intelligence officer of Lancashire unit of the IRA  
Conspiracy to cause explosions  
Sentence - 4 years in prison

M McCabe: Conspiracy to cause explosions  
Sentence - 3 years in prison

The guilty plea came as a surprise to everyone, including the defence solicitor. It was literally a last-minute decision by the three, unknown to anyone. They felt it was the best way to avoid implicating other militants in a long-drawn out trial, and to secure as short as possible a sentence for themselves. In doing this, they went directly against the wishes of their own organisation, Sinn Fein.

The outcome of the trial represents a major victory for the State. To begin with, the case for the prosecution was extremely weak, and a good defence within the court, together with a solidarity campaign outside, could well have secured an acquittal. This is why the court was only too happy to accept a guilty plea and to impose what were relatively light sentences. Indeed, the judge was almost friendly in his tone, describing the defendants as 'misguided young men' in his summing-up (a far cry from the usual hysterical outbursts by the judiciary in trials like this). There are also more serious implications. We have seen in recent years the increasing use of 'conspiracy' charges against left-wingers and Republicans in this country. Those charged have invariably defended themselves, and by so doing have drawn public attention to the nature of conspiracy law and the use to which it is being put. A guilty plea to conspiracy charges inevitably exonerates the State. It makes it easier to use the conspiracy laws against other people, and it makes it more difficult for those people to defend themselves.

The trial can also damage Sinn Fein. Both wings of the Republican movement have con-

sistently denied responsibility for the bombs which have been going off all over the country. The guilty plea to conspiracy to cause explosions by three of its own members could do serious harm to the credibility of Sinn Fein. It gives more ammunition to the reactionary Tory MP's and the right-wing press, who have been calling for the banning of Sinn Fein.

The defence campaign which was organised to build up support for the Blackburn 3 was left high and dry. The whole tone of the campaign tended to stress the lack of police evidence and the nature of the conspiracy law, with the implication always present that the three were innocent. The fact that the three were political prisoners was not made the major point of the campaign. In trials of this kind, it is not up to revolutionaries to presume the innocence or guilt of defendants, but to stress that they are victimised by the State in order to further the aims of the ruling class. Any solid-

arity campaign must be firmly based on the principle of never over-demanding the release of all political prisoners, whether they are 'legally' guilty or not. At the moment, there are 32 Irish political prisoners in this country either serving sentences or on remand. That number will grow, and it is more vital than ever that a national solidarity campaign demanding their release be organised. Such a campaign can only be effective if it is linked to a wider Irish solidarity movement in this country which can mobilise opposition to British policies in Ireland. With the imminent demise of the Anti-Internment League, there is no organisational structure which can facilitate the growth of an Irish solidarity campaign.

National activity by the left on a united front basis is essential if the Irish struggle is not to be completely forgotten.

Brendan Rallly





# PALESTINE

At the time of writing, an uneasy peace has settled on the Middle East. A vicious and bloody war costing thousands of lives and millions of pounds worth of equipment has been fought between the reactionary Arab states and the racist State of Israel.

The world's 'Superpowers', who have supplied nearly all the arms used in the recent conflict, have with typical hypocrisy stepped in to impose a ceasefire. They are annoyed, it seems, when the arms they have supplied in such abundance have actually been used. The ostensible reason for the war is to get the return of Arab territories seized by the Israelis in 1967. In return, Sadat and his allies have promised to recognise the state of Israel. In the conflict, one thing has been almost totally ignored - the fate of the Palestinian people who have been subjected to a racist tyranny by Israeli Zionism while the ruling classes of the West have applauded, and poured in the arms necessary for the maintenance of Israel. The British press and other media have reserved their ample supply of righteous anger for criticism of Black September and other Palestinian liberation groups which, in their just struggle for the right to live, have been driven to extreme and incorrect tactics.

Meanwhile, Israel's Arab neighbours have been able to divert the social struggle at home - a struggle waged with ever increasing ferocity - by fostering rabid chauvinism and pan-Arab nationalism. While Egyptian leaders have made racist speeches threatening to push the Jews into the sea, the Palestine liberation movement has restricted itself to the call for a secularisation of Palestine. In Egypt itself, the working class is starting to wake up - strikes and demonstrations by students and workers (e.g. textile workers in Cairo in 1972) have placed considerable strain on the Sadat regime. While the Egyptian rulers have been conducting a verbal war against the Israelis, they have been conducting a physical war against their own working class and other dissidents. Sadat has denationalised certain sections of the economy, and has followed a wage restraint policy that pegs the wages of some Egyptian workers to less than £2 a week. Meanwhile, the Egyptian ruling class wallows in the kind of ostentatious luxury not seen since the days of Farouk. In fact, Sadat himself has taken one of Farouk's old palaces as a private residence. Undoubtedly, one of the reasons for the latest war is the necessity to unite the creaking edifice of Egyptian society. A call for national unity in the struggle against Israel gives Sadat any excuse he might need to intensify domestic repression against the workers' and student movements. In any case, it is likely to work - only the prospect of further Israeli expansion could unite the Egyptian people.

Inside Israel, conditions for the Arab population have got worse and worse since 1967.



GIVE THE CAPTURED TANKS TO THE WORKERS, NOT TO SADAT

Those who were not forced out into rotting refugee camps are subjected to extreme exploitation. Arab contract labour, which has none of the rights of the Jewish labour force in terms of social insurance, holidays, etc., is being used in an attempt to build up a native Israeli capitalism. Arab workers on Jewish-owned farms often get only a quarter of the wages paid to Jewish workers - and that is when the Zionists allow them to be employed at all. Needless to say, there is systematic repression of the Arab press and an ever watchful police eye is kept on prospective Arab dissidents - as the regular round-ups of suspected 'terrorists' indicates. Israel has made it obvious that it intends to keep most if not all of the land it has captured in the Six Day War, and the hawks in the Knesset (Israeli Parliament) are constantly hinting at further expansion. We should make no mistake - Israel, like South Africa and Rhodesia, is a racist state. It is also the Middle Eastern bulwark of American imperialism. The disgusting actions of the Nazis and Stalinists against the Jewish people in no way justifies the institutionalised racism of Israel.

In this situation, revolutionaries must be quite clear in establishing a way forward.

Sections of the Arab fedayeen (freedom fighters) movement and the Israeli working class are discovering that it will be necessary to destroy the imperialist state of Israel and the corrupt Arab states before the Palestinians can return to Palestine and live with the existing Israeli population. We give no support to Sadat. In fact, only his overthrow (and that of the other reactionary Arab regimes) can lead to a successful struggle against Zionism. The Israeli working class must fight for a struggle of revolutionary defeatism - a struggle that calls for an end to participation in imperialist wars against the Arabs. It is absolutely necessary to forge direct political links between the fedayeen and Israeli revolutionaries - a process that is already taking place. We express all solidarity with these tendencies.

- DOWN WITH SADAT
- DOWN WITH MEIR
- VICTORY TO A UNITED ARAB-ISRAELI WORKING CLASS STRUGGLE

GARY LONG

## RED TAPE

Depending on where you work, at some stage you are likely to be approached by representatives of both the appropriate trade union and the rank-and-file group in that union who both hope to sign you up. Where does the rank-and-file fit in?

It can be seen as having two aims: firstly to provide a more militant stand over such issues as pay, holiday and working conditions and secondly to 'democratise the Union bureaucracy'. In other words trade union members have to be prepared to take on not only the employers but also the trade union officials. Are we also going to have to take on the rank-and-file officials?

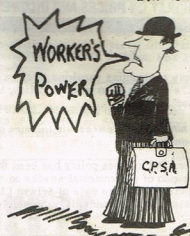
As a new member of the Civil and Public Service Association (CPSA) I have been alarmed by my first encounters with the CPSA rank and file group 'Redder Tape'. Their magazine, while admittedly carrying some excellent articles, is littered with unexplained abbreviations and presents a very cliquish image. For example, in a report on the annual CPSA conference you find the sentence 'We all know what happened then' with no explanations. There are incomprehensible articles and references to characters obviously well-known to the writers of the magazine, but to who else? The rank and file perhaps? I doubt it.

Similarly at a recent Union rally in Leeds over the civil servants pay claim, a group, which identified themselves as a Redder Tape group, while on the one hand opposing the platform, still displayed a very obvious chumminess towards them.

What does all this mean? While the constitutional changes in trade union structure proposed by rank and file groups are extremely important, this syndrome I've been describing actively militates against the ordinary member going to a meeting and getting up and saying his piece. This syndrome makes the leadership of rank and file groups into a new clique thereby reinforcing the very structures they are trying to destroy.

Are we going to have to try an 'Even-Redder Tape'?

EVA LONG.



## SUBSCRIBE TO LIBERTARIAN STRUGGLE

£1 For Twelve issues

I enclose a cheque/P.O. for £1 as a subscription to LIBERTARIAN STRUGGLE.

NAME.....

ADDRESS.....

LIBERTARIAN STRUGGLE, 29 Cardigan Road, Leeds 6.

make all cheques/P.O.s payable to ORA General Fund.

## ORA groups & contact addresses

If you think that the direct control by working people over all aspects of their lives is worth fighting for...

If you think that what's needed now is independent rank and file organisation linking all aspects of working class struggle - in housing, schools, women's rights, in work, and all others.

If you think that the independence of these organisations must be defended from takeover by the Labour traitors, union bureaucracies, and the 'NEW leaderships' If you think that an organisation is needed which fights for revolutionary politics in everyday struggles but has no intention of seizing power for itself.

THEN, JOIN THE ORA! LOCAL GROUPS.

Glasgow: Gordon Sykes, 32 Queen Elizabeth Square, Glasgow C3.

Hull: Marion McCartney, 13 Colman Street, Hull.

Lancaster: Joe Thornberry, 56 Norfolk Street, Lancaster.

Leeds: Trevor Savage, Flat 3, 35 Richmond Road, Leeds 6.

Manchester: Les Smith, 277 Kingsway Park, Davyhulme, Umston, Manchester.

North London: Doug Durrant, 68a Chingford Road, London E. 17.

York: Neil Hunt, 24 Moss Street, York.

There are also contacts in: Andover, Birmingham, Colchester, Dundee, Edinburgh, Harlech, Liverpool, West, East and South London, Newcastle, Norwich, Oxford, Poole, Reading and Swansea. If you want to be put in touch, write to Terry Green, at the York Group address.



# LEN MURRAY REVEALS

Late on Friday evening, 26th October, BBC television featured a talk with Len Murray, new General Secretary of the TUC, confronting three questioners - Reginald Maudling (Tory ex-Home Secretary), Eric Jacobs (rightist Labour correspondent of the Sunday Times) and Alex Jarrett (Director of the massive publishing cartel International Publishing Corporation IPC).

In the discussion Murray totally confessed his role as policeman of the unions' membership and outlined in detail his willingness to stifle militancy and assist in implementation of the government's legislation concerning pay and trade unions. Selected quotes from the interview given below reveal Murray's treacherous and collaborationist policies as leader of the TUC.

## MURRAY ON PHASE THREE

Murray and Feather have been consistent advocates of 'talks' at Downing Street. Murray's reasons are that by talking he can change Ted Heath's intentions and indicated this when he said:

*'The government has taken up some of our ideas in Phase Three - some very good ideas - the results of negotiation.'*

Phase Three is nothing more than a direct attack on the living standards of the working class while profit restrictions are lifted for the bosses. The package was dressed up with small, almost meaningless 'generous concessions'. These concessions were the result of Murray's 'good ideas' which, because they were negotiated, legitimised Phase Three in the eyes of many workers.

## MURRAY ON PRICES AND INCOMES

In reply to Maudling enquiring what was the TUC's attitude to an incomes policy, Murray replied:

*'We are not against a prices and incomes policy in principle.'*

The prices and incomes policy has been the major weapon of governmental attacks on the working class since the days of Selwyn Lloyd. Murray sees nothing against it 'in principle'.



## MURRAY ON PHASE ONE

Murray outlined the behaviour of the negotiators of the TUC in Phase One:

*'The TUC negotiating before and during Phase One was ready to ask affiliated unions to recommend to impose a voluntary incomes restraint providing something was done on prices.'*

Murray and the TUC were ready and willing to police workers who were demanding higher wages until price inflation caused a wave of militancy which the TUC could not control.

## MURRAY ON JOINT UNION/EMPLOYER GOVERNMENT BODIES

In reply to a bout of discussion concerning the National Economic Development Council (NEDC) - a joint union-employer government body which was responsible for the infamous spread of 'productivity deals' and National Productivity Year - Murray stated:

*'I must give full credit to Reginald Maudling for his setting-up of the NEDC in 1963 which made great headway in productivity.'*

The productivity movement in the late 60's was responsible for mass redundancies as bosses sacrificed increased productivity for increased profits. Murray gives this 'full credit'.

## MURRAY ON COLLECTIVE BARGAINING

Murray was asked why the unions were backing the slogan 'Hands off collective bargaining.' He replied:

*'Hands off collective bargaining' is just a journalistic slogan.'*

When the working class is fighting for its basic rights defending one of those rights becomes to Murray a 'journalistic slogan.' In answer to the criticism that free collective bargaining is 'unfair' in that dockers get paid a lot and nurses a little Murray's attitude differed little from that of a high Tory:

*'No... voluntary collective bargaining doesn't (historically) give a fair distribution of income. The government must come in.'*

Murray makes no mention that the employers ensure an uneven development of progress of wage struggles by holding back the weaker sections of the working class. According to him, it is the fault of collective bargaining, into which the government must intervene.



## MURRAY ON GUARANTEES TO THE GOVERNMENT

Maudling stated the NEDC failed because the unions could not carry out their part of the bargain and were unwilling. Murray again made his position clear:

*'I wouldn't offer the government a copper bolted cast iron guarantee because I couldn't carry it out.'*

Talking again to Tory Maudling:

*'We (the TUC) can only promise to do what we can and that can be our best - sometimes our very best.'* ...

*'...Unions don't just consist of its leaders - we have to try and convince the members. We can say to them we want you to accept this - it's the best we'll get. I can't promise they'll accept but we'll try always to persuade the members.'*



# LEN MURRAY IN ACTION!

The following letter was sent to Trade Union branches all over the country during the November firemen's strike against wage limits in Phase Three:

CIRCULAR No. 37 1973 / 74

I have issued the following statement in full consultation with the Fire Brigades Union on the strike in Glasgow fire service:

I hope you will ensure that none of your members in any way give support or assistance to the men who, by acting in defiance of the instructions of their Union, are threatening public safety, and that if the opportunity presents itself, your own members will encourage the firemen to process their grievances through their Union.

L. MURRAY  
GENERAL COUNCIL  
T.U.C.

The only reason Murray won't give the Tories guarantees is because he can't control his membership to accept a deal. Murray's role is to make sure that workers are 'good boys' and when that occurs he'll give all the guarantees the Tories wish for.

In reply to more pumping by Maudling, Jarrett and Jacobs as to why the unions were unhelpful, Murray actually pleaded:

*'What do you want me to do?'*

Jarrett replied that it was necessary to make labour more mobile, more able to be retrained, to take new machinery, etc. Murray, not highlighting that labour mobility is the cover for destruction of well-organised union shops and also produces closures and mass redundancies, replied:

*'We've done our best - we've become a highly mobile society. The TUC has worked hard to make labour more mobile.'*

Murray followed this up with:

*'We want to help the government.'*

## MURRAY ON INFLATION

On being questioned that in 'normal' circumstances 'do wages cause inflation?', Murray came up with the answer:

*'Right.'*

He also stated:

*'Rising prices is nothing.'*

He said little else on this issue, when it is the central factor in the erosion of the living standards of the working class - not a single mention of the interest war, speculation and vastly increased profits. This man never puts the case of the workers.

## MURRAY ON THE LAW, UNIONS AND INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS ACT

Should the unions comply with the law? Murray, when finally pinned down, answered with a firm 'yes' and clearly stated:

*'I'm not going to defend widespread breaking of the law.'*

Concerning the £100,000 sequestration of funds from the political fund of the AUEW by the National Industrial Relations Court, Murray said:

*'They (the AUEW) have been punished for breaking the law - they've been punished. Some unions I would call extreme in their actions against the law.'*

*'The TUC General Council said in very careful words that they would give support for the recognition of the AUEW at Con-Mech, but we did not say we would support the techniques used (i.e. a strike) to gain that recognition.'*

Murray believes the AUEW was justly punished before the law and he made sure the TUC gave no support to AUEW action at Con-Mech. On being criticised for having lost some control of the membership of the TUC and that a gap was widening between leaders and led, Murray lamented with:

*'The working people are more educated and more critical today. They just don't accept advice - they resent authority.'*

Remarks concerning 'extremist' leaders (Scanlon and Jones) were answered by a revealing perspective as to their role:

*'These people have great energy and enthusiasm and it is our job to harness it and channel it.'*





# ALL

The most threatening remark came from debater Jacobs when he told Murray:

*'The Shah of Persia has empowered his security forces to control prices and incomes. This will happen if you don't help Len.'*

This hint of the content of Phase Ten passed Murray by in the debate. He made no comment on the role of the Army in Persia shooting down strikers to 'enforce' an incomes policy.



Throughout the whole discussion Murray played out the role of Ted Heath's boy, pleading that he was 'doing his best and trying hard' constantly asking the three Conservatives 'what do you want me to do?' and saying that 'we want to help.' His whole attitude was to swallow the Tory ideological kit-bag that the working class in the unions is to blame for the present economic situation. He hardly touched on the fact that the Tory government, backed by a bourgeoisie that is profit-mad, is bent on attacking the living standards of the working class. Conciliatory and friendly and chatty with Maudling and co - Murray is a bosses' man. Maudling in the same spirit congratulated Murray for his good work for the Tories with:

*'I wish you all the best in your new job.'*

Murray replied with a humble:

*'Thank you.'*

His job will be well done. Murray has revealed that if the membership lifts the pressure from him for just a small moment, he will be at 10 Downing Street negotiating with the 'real men' of the Tory government trying to carry out their wishes.



*'Like father - like son'* Murray follows in the footsteps of Feather trying to stifle the independent activity of the rank and file while working with the government. When the British workers decide to take on the government in a 'once and for all' confrontation, in the form of a general strike, they will have to discredit Murray and his friends on the General Council of the TUC. No-one must believe that his type represents the workers in any negotiations. In a general strike, the TUC must either be directly under the control of the rank and file or the rank and file must rapidly create their own councils of policy, discussion and action. It is these units of working class power that we argue for in any struggle. We do this by constantly exposing the TUC and its leaders in their role and posing the alternative 'Workers' Councils'.

BOB CAMPBELL

## HUNGARY 1919

### part two

During its brief existence, the Hungarian Workers Republic of 1919 did more than merely resist the encircling Rumanian and Czechoslovak armies, who were created, paid, and supplied by Britain and France. They also resisted the deliberate creation of famine by the official Allied blockade.

The legal profession was replaced by a system of revolutionary tribunals elected by the workers of the district.

All factories with more than 20 workers were 'socialised' i.e. run by workers' committees.

In education 'children's soviets' educated the children in a new self-managed way of life by giving the Children's Committees shared control of school discipline with the teachers. Sex education was taught with the aid of films and lectures. Birth control was advocated and the stigma of illegitimacy removed.

The Commissariat of Housing restricted upper and middle class tenants to 3 rooms maximum in their own houses and used the rest to house the homeless and those forced to live in slums. Newly-wed couples were provided by the Commissariat with basic furniture and kitchen utensils. Day nurseries were organised for working class mothers. Children's villages were set up for orphans.

At the end of April, the renewed Rumanian offensive threatened Budapest. The working class districts rose on mass and factories

sent columns to the front. The government held dozens of mass meetings to explain its policies and to amend them through discussion. These were no false public relations exercises but tired men and women (both the speakers and the audience) struggling to lay the foundations of working class power and control in the midst of a world of enemies. The Rumanians were routed but a new French-organised Czechoslovak army immediately posed another threat.

At the same time, the feudal landowners, officers, priests and other riff-raff came together in the French-controlled town of Szeged to found a 'National Government' with the benevolent help of the French General d'Esperey. The figurehead they chose was the by-now tatty and battered 'respectable liberal' Count Karolyi.

The Red Army routed the Czech invasion but the Allied blockade was literally beginning to starve the Revolution. In June, naval cadets staged a counter-revolutionary rising - their main publicity was against the 'Jews' and the threat to civilisation posed by the seating of 20 women as elected deputies of the Budapest workers council. After street fighting they were crushed but the constant threat of physical intervention by British and French armies held back the necessary crushing of the counter-revolutionaries - only five

plotters were shot and this after the cadets had fired naval cannon indiscriminately at working class districts!

Meanwhile the 'National Government' set up a 'National Army' led by the reactionary landowner Admiral Horthy, and composed of units called 'death battalions'. These began their training in the countryside around beleaguered Budapest - murdering peasants, torturing Jews, killing the teachers and administrators of the children's villages.

On August 1st, with the Rumanians once more attacking and fifty miles from Budapest, the Hungarian Workers Republic ended. Bela Kun and his government resigned in return for Allied promises of an ending of the blockade. A Social Democrat government was set up and the Hungarian workers waited by the Allies to keep their word.

First the Rumanians swept in - wholesale massacres took place. Jews were hunted, anything left of value was looted. Then the Rumanians left and on November 16th Horthy's men marched into Budapest. The British and French had at last a government of gentlemen to deal with.

K.N.

## NATIONAL FRONT FASCISTS CLAIM TO HAVE 'RESPECT'



The National Front, Britain's leading fascist organisation, is trying 'to go respectable'.

In October the annual general meeting of the National Front (NF) met in Red Lion Square, London. A line of 'bodyguards' protected the doorway as leaders John Tyndall and Martin Webster prepared a new constitution which would 'finally lay to rest the untrue and unfair assertion that the National Front is a 'fascist' or some form of totalitarian organisation.'

These 'true' and 'unfair' assertions are illustrated below. They are facsimiles of the advertisements taken from Page 4 of 'Spearhead', the journal of the NF when it was the

National Socialist Movement, in the August/September issue 1964.

The editor was John Tyndall, President of the NF and the stop press box announcements: Martin Webster involved in incident with Jomo Kenyatta. International repercussions. Full story next issue! Martin Webster is now National Organiser of the National Front..

**WANTED.** Pre-war publications of British Fascist/Nazi groups (not periodicals). John, EM/SKLAR, London, WC1

**SWASTIKA BADGES.** In Red, White and Blue! Buy yours now! Only 5/- each. Send s.a.e. to Box 6 'Spearhead'

The Third Reich in sound. Details from 'Spearhead' sound service. Box 6

**OIL PORTRAITS** of Adolf Hitler. To order: Send s.a.e. for details to Box 1 'Spearhead'

**WANTED:** Nazi books and publications of all types on political subjects: illustrated books on rallies, etc. G.F. Watkins, Box 3 'Spearhead'.

**SPECIAL OFFER:** Four Photograph c portraits of Adolf Hitler. 5/- per set from 'Spearhead' book service

## DRAUGHTSMEN FEEL THE FREEZE

'Never have so many been out for so long for so little.' So the unfortunate pun went on the picket line outside Fenners Marfleet, Hull. It had real meaning for 15 draughtsmen who had been on strike for 15 weeks. The men worked for MEC (Manufacturers Equipment Company), a subsidiary of the national firm, Fenners, also based in Hull.

They claimed that the firm had not fulfilled an earlier agreement to carry out 'a reasonable and normal reassessment of wages' - the company had refused, using the government's wage freeze as an excuse. So the dispute began, the firm thinking that as there were only 15 of them they could intimidate and make an example of them. After a work-to-rule by the men, they were locked out by the firm and picketing began on 6th July at the MEC factory. There was no support from the AUEW in the firm at that time, or from the T & GWU. Drivers who did turn back in unofficial support of the strike, risking victimisation, especially those in non-union firms, which MEC began using as the strike went on in the hope of getting equipment through.

After a month the picketing was having an effect, so the company began using alternative dropoff points in Hull from where they hoped to smuggle the loads into the factory in

their own vans. The places were easy to detect, mainly because of the amazing lack of subtlety for instance, one place drivers were directed to was CEM warehouse, a smashed-up house in a derelict area. But then followed a period of escalation by MEC, in which they jumped round Hull opening new warehouses, which were quickly detected by drivers who informed the pickets.

The tactic of opening a 'large number of alternative warehouses was designed to stretch the reserves of the pickets' - there were only 15 of them, so though each man picketed all day, every day, on many of the picket lines only a placard could be left saying 'MEC dispute. TASS please do not cross'. Firms outside Hull such as a sprout-picking/packing factory at North Newbald were obviously being paid for the use of their premises.

By now the men were told that they had been blacked by all employers in Hull, so they had to win to save their jobs. To fight this new threat they approached the workers in the main Fenners factory in Hull and got the AUEW workers to allow them to picket there. Previously they had been picketing at the subsidiary MEC. The turning point of the dispute was the blacking of work for MEC by the workers at the main Fenners factory. The dispute was now directly with Fenners - they were now dealing

directly with their oppressors and not with one of its puppet subsidiaries. However, it was not until mid-August that AUEW began giving more than tacit help. It was the men and the drivers who had sustained the strike until then. The Hull dockers gave further support to the strike by blacking firms whose lorries and equipment were breaking the picket lines. The strike was affecting the external companies now - from where pressure could be brought on Fenners to resolve the dispute.

The strike ended in September with talks between the AUEW and Fenners, a victory achieved against the 'odds' by workers who though members of a large union belonged to a small section not renowned for their militancy. Victory was achieved by workers solidarity, support from the drivers, the workers at Fenners, the dockers and eventually the union bureaucracy. Was the AUEW frightened of confrontation at that stage of the freeze, preferring to wait for Phase Three, or did they consider the issue to be too small? Although numerically the strike was small, it showed that the impetus came from the workers solidarity and it is only through this that struggles can be won

JULIE SHARP



## Lessons from the past:

# U.K. CAPITALISM 1870-1923

The present difficulties facing British capitalism are in many ways comparable to previous crises. Both the economic conditions and the response of capitalists and workers show similarities. The trouble for the capitalists started at the end of the nineteenth century with the failure of British capitalism to maintain profitability.

Britain in 1870 was producing a third of the world's industrial goods, yet by 1913 it produced only 14%. It had been overtaken in productivity by the U.S., Germany and Sweden. At the same time as the increasing industrialization of other countries British workers were organizing into Trade Unions and fighting for higher wages. In the 1870's unionism grew amongst skilled workers and towards the end of the 1880's the unskilled began to unionize. By 1914 there were four million trade unionists, over a quarter of all industrial workers.

The growth of industrial capital, which initially enabled Britain to capture such a large share of world industrial output, had defended our high profits and high real wages. In order to fight off increasing competition this high ratio of profits to wages had to be maintained. Therefore, in the years before the First World War the working class was under attack directly from the courts and growing unemployment. 1908 saw the start of growing militancy and in 1912 alone 40 million days were lost in strikes (compared to 10 million in 1970). The strikes were a response to the capitalist attack by the rank and file, and a protest against the trade union leaders.

### CONFLICTS

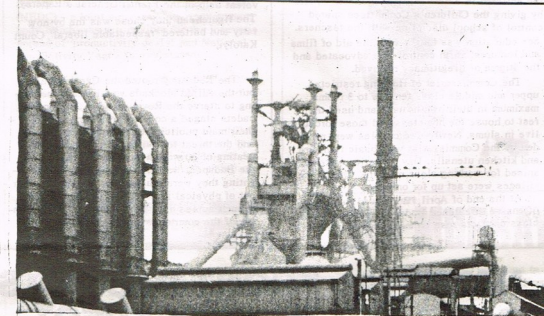
From 1880 till 1895 real wages (i.e. the purchasing power of wages) rose but between 1895 and 1905 real wages fell. This fall in wages was one of the causes of increasing labour militancy. Another factor was organised labour's dislike of management's attempts to introduce new labour-saving methods of production. Productivity had failed to rise, mainly because British industrialists had failed to invest sufficiently, whilst other countries, especially Germany and the U.S., greatly increased the amount of capital per worker. British capitalists were also investing overseas more and more. In 1870 overseas investment amounted to £35 million, by 1913 it had reached £200 million - about 9% of the national income, and one third of total profits.

The conflicts resulting from this international expansion of capitalism and imperialism led to the First World War. The war temporarily restored the profitability of large sections of capital - there was virtually no control of profits and there was a huge increase in demand for many goods. On the other hand, real wage rates are estimated to have dropped by about one fifth in the first 3 years of the war, although real earnings did not fall because there was so much overtime worked. But in the long run the real wage rate was what mattered, because bonuses and overtime would not last for ever.

The decline in wages was undoubtedly partly because union leaders capitulated and abandoned the class struggle. Trade union leaders joined the government or led the working class into agreements such as the Treasury Agreement of 1915, in which they voluntarily renounced the strike weapon for the rest of the war. But there were strikes, notably in South Wales and on the Clyde. Sections of the working class overcame their feelings of patriotism when they realised the exorbitant profits being made. The luxury of the rich contrasted strongly with food shortages and queues. This is reflected in the growth of trade union membership - from around four million in 1913 to over eight million in 1919.

In the last year of the war, industrial unrest increased with the help of the shop stewards movement. A Ministry of Labour was consequently established and the workers won some concessions in the form of improved unemployment insurance. At the same time, the voluntary restrictions of wages broke down. There was a major campaign for an eight-hour day, with no loss of pay, and the rank and file became militant. The number of working days lost in 1917 and 1918 was double the figure for 1915 and 1916.

Worst hit by decreased profitability was the mining industry, which was given a subsidy. Nationalisation, however, was rejected by the government and in the long term it was left up to the owners of the mines to find a solution. In 1921 government control of the mines ended and the mine owners lost their guaranteed profit. Therefore they demanded massive wage cuts, which led to the miners strike of 1921.



At the end of the war there followed a post war boom. However, even during the 1919-20 boom industrial output did not reach the 1913 figure because of lack of investment during the war. The boom was engineered to some extent by the government to avoid class conflict resulting from demobilisation and unemployment. But this strategy was soon abandoned by the ruling class in favour of restoring profits by cutting wages and by putting Britain back on the gold standard at the exchange rate with the dollar which had existed before the war (i.e. revaluing the pound and making British exports costly). The result was the sudden huge slump of 1920-21. Industrial production fell by more than a quarter, unemployment increased from 2% to 18%, and company profits were halved. If the industrial capitalists were to compete in world markets and to continue to make a profit, then costs had to be cut. Unemployment was to be just one of the weapons used to weaken the bargaining strength of the workers.

The end of the war was the start of a huge wave of strikes. Between 1919 and 1926 the average number of working days lost was about 40 million a year. The class war was recognised by both sides. The ruling class was terrified of the Triple Alliance (miners, railwaymen and transport workers) paralysing the country and revolution was feared if the working class was allowed to win the strikes.

The Triple Alliance issued a call for a sympathy strike on the 15th of April, but the National Union of Railwaymen's leader found an excuse to withdraw the Triple Alliance support. This was Black Friday.

By 1921 wage-cutting and attempts to lengthen the working week were becoming central to the capitalists' strategy. Baldwin argued that 'all workers in this country have got to take a reduction in wages.' Many wages fell by nearly 40% between 1921 and 1924, and many of the cuts were only made after fierce class struggle.

International competition was continuing to grow. World manufacturing output was growing whilst British output was falling. By 1925 the exchange rate with the dollar had risen to its pre-war level and the gold standard was restored. This made the prices of British goods too high to allow them to compete with the products of other countries. The restoration of the gold standard to try and win back for Britain her position as premier financial capital of the world was achieved at the expense of industry and labour. Financiers also benefited from the expansion of the national debt, on which they received interest payments. This was just one of the ways the bourgeoisie survived at a time of economic crisis. On the other hand, the working class was suffering

defeats. Real wages fell and trade union membership was down to five and a half million. Strikes became defensive and lock-outs became frequent.

The mining industry continued to be at the heart of conflict. After Black Friday, the miners struck for three months, but were forced to return on the owners' terms. In 1924, the owners increased wages but in 1925 they demanded further wage cuts. Conflict was postponed by a temporary subsidy from the government (Red Friday), the Samuel Commission was set up and the TUC pledged backing for the miners. When, at the end of April 1926, the subsidy ended the miners were locked out. The TUC called a general strike for 3rd May. They had had 9 months since Red Friday to organise and prepare, but they had failed to do so. The ruling class, however, had not sat back, but had carefully mobilised its strike-breaking forces. After 9 days the struggle was lost when the TUC leaders called off the strike, with obvious relief. The miners held out for a further six months before giving in. The complete catastrophe of the general strike weakened the working class for many years to come.

The most militant sections of the labour movement in the late 1920's were from the rank and file, and not the official movement. Militants in a number of unions, forced under communist leadership, the National Minority Movement. This rejected the class collaboration of union leaders, but the movement was compromised by its links with Stalinist policies.

### CLASS STRUGGLE

What, then, should we learn from the class struggle 1870-1926?

- (1) Britain suffers from a separation of finance and capital which weakens international competitiveness. For example, finance presses for high interest rates to attract foreign funds and maintain the reserves while industry wants low interest rates for cheap investment.
- (2) British capitalism suffered and continues to suffer from international competitiveness. This first became a problem in the 1880's and since the Second World War it has become prominent again. This is due to a low level of investment. One reason for this is low profitability. Higher profits could be made outside England because the growing strength of the working class was making high profits uncertain.
- (3) Attempts by the working class to increase wages or maintain its standard of living when capitalism is under increasing competition are therefore potentially revolutionary.
- (4) Capitalism in the past has managed to survive by adapting itself to working class demands it could not meet. But it cannot go on adapting forever if the working class recognises the nature of capitalism and mobilises its strength. Up to now it has been sold out by union leaders and the party bosses.

The present crisis is reaching enormous dimensions even more than in the past. At each point of the struggle, politicians and union leaders will have to reveal their desire to shackle the working class to the demands of the bourgeoisie more and more often. We must constantly expose these incidents to show to workers, who trust the present institutions of the labour movement, the treacherous and anti-working class role of these leaders and present a clear programme that poses workers' self management as the only alternative.

## THE PRESS FUND.

So far income and expenditure have just kept pace with rising donations and sales. LIBERTARIAN STRUGGLE needs a few composers, better quality newsprint to cope with a regular increase in the number of pages. Libertarian ideas have to be widespread in the class struggle which is reaching greater intensity. LIBERTARIAN STRUGGLE must be able to increase its effectiveness in this fight.

DONATIONS TO 29, CARDIFAN ROAD, LEEDS 6. MAKE OUT P.O.S & CHEQUES TO THE O.R.A. GENERAL FUND.



# Letters

Dear Comrades,

I found the article on the economic situation in the Soviet Union in last month's issue of *Libertarian Struggle* very good. However, I think that certain political factors need to be pointed out before we can fully understand why Russia is encountering the same problems as those faced by Western capitalism. These problems are not part of some universal law of economics, but are dependent on the political and economic organisation of society.

Firstly, in the field of agriculture. Before the 1917 revolution, Russia had a structure of rural life based on the mir, or village commune. This had close parallels with a genuine socialist community in that the members decided collectively on the allocation of land on the basis of need (usually the number of mouths in each family group). This structure was so strong that it survived the ruthless drive of Tsarist Prime Minister Stolypin to dismantle it and replace it with the orthodox capitalist system of homestead farming. It was Lenin, not Stalin, who destroyed this primitive communal mode of production when he brought in the capitalist New Economic Policy in 1921. The slogan for the peasants at that time was 'Enrich yourselves'. Those who (a) had possession of the best land, (b) were prepared to exploit their fellow peasants or (c) were well in with the party or the Red Army proceeded to do so, thus creating the class of kulaks or rich peasants. These Stalin savagely exterminated in a mistaken attempt to reintroduce the collective under the authoritarian control of the State. The best estimates put the number of peasants liquidated at 1½ million. Thus it is not the collective structure itself which is a weakness, but the imposition of centrally directed targets which take no account of the notorious volatility of agriculture, particularly in a climate like Russia's. When the peasants found themselves unable to fulfil unrealistic targets, they were faced with further coercion. They naturally reasoned that if they ensured that targets stayed low (by repeated under-fulfilment), they would have a little in hand for the bad years.

Secondly, the Russian government has not overcome alienation in industry. It is surprising how many people overlook this obvious fact when considering the Soviet Union. Yet the situation in Britain gives close parallels. When nationalisation is carried out under State control, rather than workers' control, it is clear that the individual worker will feel no more identification with the monolithic State bureaucracy than with the overbearing native board of directors. Thus the worker feels his first priority is to protect himself and his workmates from either redundancy or further exploitation in the form of higher output targets. The leap in production figures which always follows State nationalisation is due to the rationalisation of some of the intrinsic inefficiencies in capitalism such as the middleman and the paraphernalia of marketing techniques.

I hope the article on Russia does not start a long argument on whether Russia is state capitalist, a degenerate workers' state, bureaucratic collectivist or whatever. The label which is attached is not as important as understanding the reasons why Russia has reached its present situation.

Fratemally,

Bill Broome

P.S. The fact that a new grain output record of 215 million tons has been reached in Russia only shows the inefficiency of centralised target-setting - as did the figure of 170 million tons last year. What sort of 'planned economy' results in nearly a 30% difference in successive annual figures?

Dear Comrades,

In the October 'Libertarian Struggle' you suggest that, since libertarian solutions in Ireland today are utopian and irrelevant, libertarians should support the Republican movement. I am puzzled as to why you should take this position. Certainly libertarian solutions stand little chance of being adopted in Ireland while the majority of the population hold reactionary views. However, since this is equally true of England, should we all be supporting the Labour Party?

Your writer suggests that those who do not follow his line are unprincipled. This adjective might be better reserved for those who, while calling themselves libertarians, give any support, however critical, to those whose nationalist propaganda and authoritarian militarist organisation clearly shows them to be the enemies of libertarian beliefs.

To be specific, as advocates of class struggle, what do you think of the statements of the Provisionals attacking 'reactionary Marxism'? As opponents of racism, what do you think of propaganda like the Republican 'Irish Soldiers Letter' that tells British troops that while they are fighting in Ulster blacks are sleeping with their wives? As opponents of repression, what do you think of those whose fanning and feathering of sexual deviants and purveyors of cannabis shows very clearly their own attitudes to law and order? As advocates of women's liberation, what do you think of those who while claiming to be 'non-sectarian' are incapable of giving straight answers to such simple questions like whether they are in favour of laws against contraception and abortion in a united Ireland?

Finally, your article at no point mentions the existence of the Protestant working class and the UDA. UDA members have shown themselves willing to engage in armed struggle with the occupying forces and speak a pseudo-socialist rhetoric no more or less convincing than similar IRA declarations. Do we support their struggle? Are their detainees and prisoners

included in the Irish political prisoners for whose release you call?

Yours fraternally,  
Roger Sandell

In the editorial of the October issue of *Libertarian Struggle*, the editorial made three demands:

- \* release Irish political prisoners
- \* end internment now
- \* British troops out of Northern Ireland

These demands are now accepted by ORA nationally and work based on these demands are ORA policy. ORA does not support the IRA. The October issue of *Libertarian Struggle* also contained a review (It Happened Here) in which contentious points were raised that are not accepted by ORA as a whole. It is these points that Roger Sandell criticises. The review hints that one should support the IRA in their struggles against the British military with criticisms of the IRA policies and tactics as the quote given below shows:

"This is not to suggest that we give uncritical support to the IRA, but that the least we can do is take an active part in a campaign based on the demands of ending internment and withdrawing British troops."

Roger Sandell mentions none of these political demands, although he points out justifiable criticisms of the Provisional IRA. His comment that the UDA was not mentioned is because it is certainly not clear that a UDA calling itself 'loyalist', demanding a reinstatement of Stormont, and training in the British Army itself (the Ulster Defence Regiment) is ever likely to 'show themselves willing to engage in armed struggle with the occupying forces'. The UDA is armed by the British state and participates in militant strikes, rent strikes and political action only when it considers the British ruling class is not working hard enough to retain links between Northern Ireland and the rest of the UK. If the UDA are imprisoned for their 'excesses' (i.e. two were jailed for 6 months in Leeds in 1972 for possessing £200,000 worth of arms as opposed to 10/20 years for the IRA or the Stoke Newington 5), we suspect that their detention by the British state is trivial. If UDA members are jailed for attacking the British Army, in that their demands are against the British ruling class, we support their release. If they are imprisoned for 'going too far' with the loyalist wishes, they will be released by the state after a short, token detention. Hitler was jailed in the 1923 putsch for 9 months in Bavaria. Would we call him a political prisoner to be released? The Irish political prisoners who fight the British ruling class on a long term basis are those for whom we campaign and not those whose imprisonment is 'temporary' in that they support British rule.

## TEACHERS PENSIONED OFF

On Monday, November 5th, the 16 teachers' unions of England, Scotland and Wales broke off their negotiations with local education authority representatives over teachers' compulsory contributions to their superannuation scheme.

The unions now consider themselves 'in dispute' over the question - which involves the paltry sum of around £11 a year or just 15p a week. It is the principle which is being fought for, not the pittance.

After negotiations broke down, the unions decided to co-operate on planning co-ordinated action in support of their case, but just 2 days later the NAS (National Association of Schoolmasters - a sexist and backward union



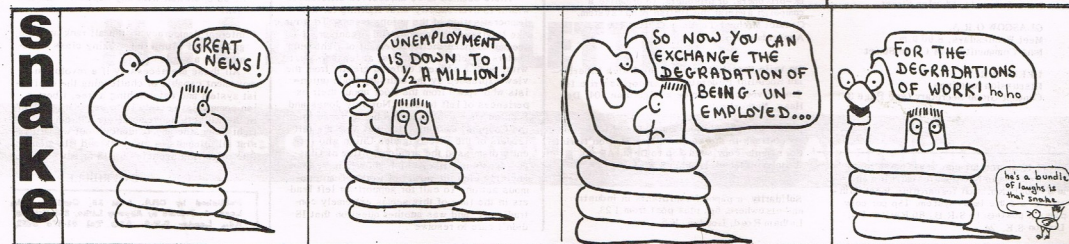
fighting only on questions of status and salary) and their affiliate the UWT (Union of Women Teachers) took unilateral action and called a union meeting in school time on Monday 12th November.

The meeting caused little disruption nationally - few schools had to close for half the afternoon - and no further campaign of action was deemed. The protest was thus singularly ineffective.

The 16 unions have now announced their 'co-ordinated action' - they intend to lobby MPs, then rally at Central Hall in Westminster, on Thursday December 6th. Useless enough, but what is even more derisory is that the protest rally will be held at 6 p.m. so that teachers may attend without schools having to close. The protest is nationwide, but teachers will attend on a representative basis so as to cause no disruption. Yet another bureaucratic appeasement of the growing militancy of the rank and file in the teaching 'profession'.

Add to this the abysmal efforts of the Executive Committees of the teachers' unions to campaign effectively for any improvement in salaries - the 25% action submitted by the NUT is all words and no action - or conditions in schools where children are forced, into part-time education, or the facile London Allowance offer of £19 a year on which no action has been taken. It is obvious that rank and file teachers can no longer rely on their union leaders to fight on their behalf - they must organise and fight themselves.

Eva Long





# FOLLOW MY LEADER

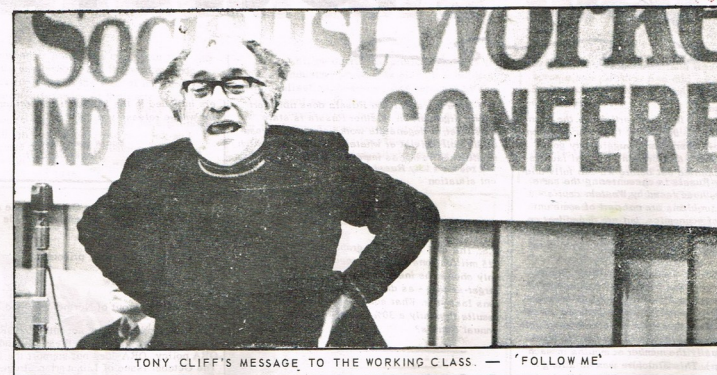
Last month saw two conferences that could prove important to the working class movement. On November 4th, the Socialist Labour League transformed themselves into the Workers Revolutionary Party, despite reputed objections within the League that the time was not yet right and that compared with, say, the Russian Bolshevik party, they were nowhere near being a mass revolutionary party. The following Sunday at Belle Vue, Manchester, the International Socialists held an 'Industrial conference to smash Phase Three' that appears to be part of the same strategy to turn IS into a mass revolutionary party.

The Socialist Worker conference was an impressive affair. There were about 3,000 people, many of them seeming to be ordinary working class militants. The conference featured speeches from Tony Cliff, Roger Rosewell (EC member of IS and Liverpool organiser) and contributions from trade unionists. Cliff's speech started with an analysis of why 1973 had been such a disastrous year for the working class. The strength of the British working class has always been its shopfloor organisation, with about a quarter of a million shop stewards. In the fifties and sixties, this kind of organisation, based on fairly small groups of workers, was able to win victory after victory in short sharp battles. The union leaders were powerless in this situation. Any national agreements that they negotiated were largely ignored as workers locally could get far above the amounts negotiated. It was a time of high wage drift and expansion.

In the seventies, this began to change as British capitalism began to decline rapidly. The employers and the government began to get much tougher and short sharp and fragmented battles involving small groups of workers no longer became enough. The time of large-scale confrontations took their place. With little wage drift, due to little excess

profit, the trade union leaders became more important, and their specific role became more and more apparent. The militant action that took place in 1972, especially the miners' strike and the freeing of the Pentonville Five, scared the union leadership. They had to regain control of the organised working class, which was beginning to act for itself more and more. They backed off from any form of confrontation. Their role of being a buffer class between worker and employer became more and more obvious.

From this essentially correct analysis, with which no libertarian communist would



TONY CLIFF'S MESSAGE TO THE WORKING CLASS. — 'FOLLOW ME'

disagree, and from a denunciation of union leaders, left and right, Cliff called for a 'new leadership, based on the rank and file, controlled by the rank and file'. He described rank and file papers as very important, but even if they improved enormously in sales and content, they were still not enough. What was needed was a national rank and file movement. It was becoming more and more apparent to the uncommitted and the hostile that this conference was an IS recruiting drive and that all questions of independent rank and file activity were going to be ignored, as was any question of the exact relationship between this rank and file movement and its

inspiration, IS. Cliff went on to attack 'economism' - the belief that gut militancy alone, with no political content, whether organised or not, is enough to win struggles. Considering that IS has largely been recruiting on just such a basis, this seemed significant. However, in the next few sentences, this call for the necessity of fighting for socialism turned cleverly into 'socialism in the working class movement equals IS' and its role as the initiator of rank and file papers and its future as the working class party. Clearly we were not going to hear from the Cliff who used to write at length about 'substitutionism' - the vanguard party substituting itself for the working class and inevitably coming into contact with it.

## GENUINE RANK AND FILE

Much was made by both Cliff and Rosewell of the need for a genuine rank and file. They stated that this conference was not (enough) delegated, and that such a conference, based on delegates actually representing the people they claim to represent should be fought for and should be happening by about next February. Attacks were made on the Liaison Committee for the Defence of Trade Unions for being a phoney organisation as described above (although it wasn't attacked for being merely an appendage of the Stalinists, which might have been a bit close to home).

There seemed to be unresolved differences within IS over exactly what fighting for the democratisation of the unions means. To some, like Nagliatti, their industrial organiser, it seemed to mean the replacement of right-wing leaders by left-wing leaders, at least to start with. Such a concept differed greatly from the view expressed by the ordinary trade unionists who spoke from the floor about their experiences of left leaders. Not only Jones and Scanlon were denounced as being worse than the Coopers, Carrons, etc., but also the left leaders of the Fire Brigades Union who recently dismissed the area committee of Glasgow for their strike, which showed more than anything else the power of workers' autonomous action. To call for support for left leaders in the face of this seems extremely contradictory, and was another question that IS didn't care to resolve.

Two black speakers attacked the conference for saying nothing about racism and a hasty paragraph was tacked into the conference resolution about it. But, in general, despite Cliff's opening speech on the need for politics, little was said about racism and even less about the position of women. The conference called to smash Phase Three made no specific recommendations about this (beyond calling for a national rank and file movement) and did not mention the Equal Pay Act as a useful agitation point for opposition to Phase Three.

## WORKERS' POWER

All in all, the conference was very hopeful from the IS point of view. It showed that they can mobilise quite large numbers of workers and that, for the time being, they can present themselves in a 'serve the people' role, ignoring some of the questions of control and tactics that are bound to emerge. The anarchist viewpoint to all this was well expressed in the last paragraph of a leaflet issued for the conference by Manchester ORA:

### WHAT KIND OF WORKERS' POWER?

Revolutionary Anarchists call for the overthrow of capitalism and the State. We stand for the democratic control of the whole of society by the working class operating through workers' councils and a network of other bodies (factory committees, neighbourhood councils). No party, however 'revolutionary', can take power 'on behalf of' the working class, or as its vanguard without stifling the self-activity that is the essence of workers' power. The organisations that workers in struggle build up now will, to a large extent, determine the nature of any future socialist society. Revolutionary Anarchists therefore call for:

- \* rank and file groups to be formed in every union and industry
  - \* militant industrial action to bring down the Tories
  - \* no co-operation with any capitalist government
  - \* internal democracy within all rank and file groups and within the working class movement as a whole
- All these are necessary if a revolutionary movement capable of challenging the capitalist system and establishing a free, libertarian communist society is to be built up. Within the workers' movement, the anarchists will fight alongside any tendency - but we will resist all attempts to turn rank and file groups into recruiting agencies for IS or anyone else.

STEVE KIBBLE

Published by ORA, from 29, Cardigan Rd, Leeds 6. Printed by Anyway, Ltd, 283 Bristol Rd, London. 01-474 8400. Tel 01-474 8400.

FOR INFORMATION, ON ORA  
WRITE TO  
**24 Moss St,  
York.**

ARTICLES, SUBS, ORDERS  
FOR LIBERTARIAN STRUGGLE  
TO,  
**29 Cardigan  
Rd, Leeds 6.**

## PUBLIC MEETINGS AND EVENTS

### MANCHESTER AREA REVOLUTIONARY ANARCHISTS

Fortnightly public meetings  
Thursdays, 8.00 p.m.  
Lass O'Gowrie, Charles Street.

GLASGOW O.R.A.  
Meet Wednesdays, 8.00 p.m.  
Iona Community, 144 Clyde Street

LEEDS O.R.A.  
Discussion meetings  
Contact Group Secretary (see Page 3)

Street Research for practical, grass-roots research. Issue No. 2 on researching individual, No. 3 on researching local authorities and the legal system. 15p per copy plus p postage to S.R.B. 86 Raiton Rd, London S.E. 24

## Publications

Organisational Platform of the Libertarian Communists. (ORA pamphlet) advance orders to D. Young, 91, Burghhead Drive, Linthouse, Glasgow.

Mole Express Manchester voice of revolutionary struggle. News/reviews/exposes/graphics/features. 10p monthly from 7, Summer Terrace, Manchester M4 5WD.

The Tyranny of Structurelessness by Jo Freeman. Obtainable from Leeds Womens ORA, 29, Cardigan Rd., Leeds 6. 5p plus 3p post. 'Libertarians in all movements should study this pamphlet because it contains the core of the argument that ORGANISED libertarians have stated.' Review in April Libertarian Struggle.

Front Liberaire fortnightly paper of O.R.A. France. Sample copy from North London group, subscription details from 33, rue des Vignoles, 75020 Paris, France.

Michael Tobin, who was jailed for two years being in possession of leaflets calling on British Army soldiers to desert, has been released. He wishes to be contacted by fellow ex-prisoners, or prisoners, to organise a campaign against the British penal system. Contact Michael Tobin, P.O. Box 10638, Amsterdam, Holland.

De Vrije Socialist paper of the Dutch Libertarian Socialist Federation. For copies write to: Jan Bervoets, Willem de Zwijgerlaan 104, Den Haag, Netherlands.

Inside Story the radical magazine which specialises in the stories Fleet St. won't print. For sample copy send 25p to Dept. AP 20, 3, Belmont Road, London S.W. 4

Solidarity, a paper for militants in industry and elsewhere. 6p, plus post from 123, Lotham Road, London, E.6



No11

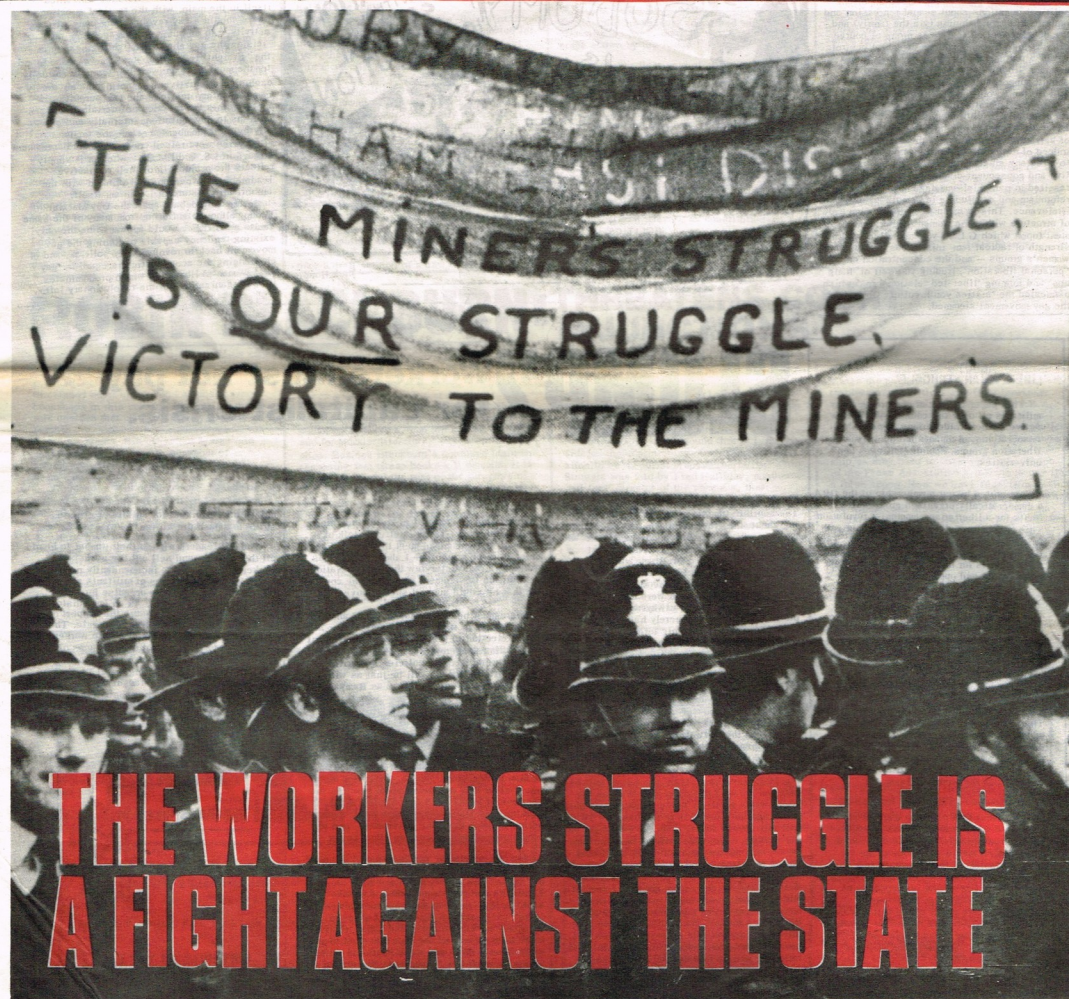
JANUARY 1974

5P

# libertarian struggle



FOR WORKERS POWER



paper of the Organisation of Revolutionary Anarchists



# GAY ROAD WHERE?

The past eighteen months has seen a collapse of whatever political credibility the Gay Liberation Front may ever have had. Despite the publication of some excellent pamphlets, and the formation of the Gay Marxist Group, the political practice of G.L.F. has remained on the reactive level of mobilising counter-demonstrations to those groups that have taken an avowedly anti-homosexual stance — like the Festival of Light and S.P.U.C.

Publications such as 'The Politics of Homosexuality', 'Fags and the Revolution' and the 'G.L.F. Manifesto' have raised important political questions about sexual repression and authoritarian conditioning (via the family) and the development of sexism as props of bourgeois ideology and major forms of social control. All of which make clear that gay liberation is no mere 'liberal cause' which nice people should support — but a fight inextricably bound up with the revolutionary struggle.

The gay liberation movement — even within its nominally revolutionary expression, the Gay Liberation Front — has been incapable, however of agitating on the basis of these analyses, or indeed of nationally defining its orientation towards any single issue. This lack of perspective and consequent disunity of action has resulted in parochialism, degenerating into reformism and concluding in complacency and irrelevance. This is in part due to the absence of structure within the women's liberation movement (upon which G.L.F. was modelled) and the strength of radical feminist ideas within many women's groups — and the concentration on 'personal liberation', ridding yourself of 'hang ups' and forming 'liberated relationships' which permeated the 'sixties youth culture from which the gay movement stemmed.



SUFFERING THE LIMITATIONS OF PROTEST POLITICS

Mark Hopper

The sterile role which many see as G.L.F.'s primary concern, i.e. politicising the gay ghetto, has also contributed to its present condition. Creating an understanding of gay oppression within the ghetto is a difficult tactic to defend. What use the new ideas coming from such an understanding may be to the new 'gay liberation' is very hard to see since the only outlet that G.L.F. provides is to go out and win more adherents to lifestyle politics. Moreover, because the ideas lack any organized perspective, and exist outside any framework for action, the entrenched culture of the ghetto has tended to swamp G.L.F. and shift its orientation away from revolutionary struggle and towards notions of acceptance within this society, as well as similar abdications.

## A RETURN TO POLITICS ?

Many involved with G.L.F. are aware of its failures and shortcomings but without any form of national co-ordination little can be done save on a local level. An attempt to revitalize the political elements within G.L.F. is the Gay Marxist Group which held its second national conference in November last year.

Discussion at this conference concerned itself, in the main, with the tactical question of where should a gay revolutionary concentrate activity — in an autonomous gay group politicising the gay ghetto, or fighting sexism in the 'straight' left. This question was posed, and for the most part, answered in terms of mutually exclusive alternatives — ignoring the obviously complementary nature of the two pursuits.

From this the reactions of certain left organizations to gay agitation, internally and externally by their members, became the focus.

Queries were raised concerning the harassment of gays in I.S. and I.M.G. — whether it simply reflects the prejudice of their respective leaderships, or perhaps were linked with the authoritarian nature of Leninism itself. Interesting debate apart the Gay Marxist Group, although suffering from many of the same faults as G.L.F., would appear to be the only existing tendency capable of turning the gay movement back to revolutionary politics, and of challenging the economic disregard for gay (and women's) liberation which predominates in the organizations of the revolutionary left.

## ABOUT 'LIBERTARIAN STRUGGLE'

This paper is written and produced by militants all over the country who are active in their trade unions, tenants' associations, claimants unions, women's liberation groups, schools, colleges and universities

We are united by our membership of the O.R.A. a democratically organized group which fights for a libertarian communist revolution. This means a revolution brought about and firmly controlled by the working class. This is the only foundation for a society in which production is for need not profit, free from exploitation and oppression.

The only way working class power can express itself is through workers' councils in the factories and neighbourhood councils in the communities. Demands for improvement in workers' living standards — whether wages, better housing etc. are not purely economic demands. The working class must make each demand a move towards the control of production and the control of their own lives. Therefore every organization and struggle of the working class must be directly and democratically controlled by the workers involved. Consequently we oppose all groups and parties who take the initiative and control from the working class.

We intend that this paper be used as an agitation weapon in the class struggle. 'Libertarian Struggle' combats the lies of the capitalist media and exposes the authoritarianism of the Stalinists and Trotskyist organizations. We put forward revolutionary libertarian ideas, forms of struggle and politics. In the present period of intense class struggle it is vital that a strong libertarian movement is built within the working class. We call all militants to buy, and sell, and write for Libertarian Struggle.

The editorial group producing this paper wish to state that signed articles do not necessarily represent national O.R.A. policy.

workers' power — no substitute.

# SLUMP? Workers must not pay for capitalist crisis.

The capitalist media is full of scare-mongering about the grave crisis facing our nation. Everyone is exhorted to 'make sacrifices' and show the spirit of Dunkirk. The present crisis is a crisis of capitalism, and the strat of the ruling class is to make the workers pay for the breakdown in the system. A while ago it was the Arabs who were blamed. Now it's the miners and the railwaymen. In fact, the energy crisis has merely hastened the recession which economic forecasts had stated would have happened in 1975 anyway.

## THE CAPITALIST SOLUTION

The ruling class hopes to save itself by inflicting a severe defeat on those workers in dispute and by widespread cuts in workers' living standards. By blaming everything on the miners and the railwaymen the Tories hope to isolate them from the rest of the Labour movement and thus make easier their defeat. At the same time they hope to get an agreement with the TUC leadership. This, the latter, will be only too pleased to fall in with this, as the secret talks between Jones, Scanlon and Whitelaw indicate. With this in the bag, the Tories will feel free to mount a savage onslaught on the working class with millions made unemployed, and millions more working short time, cowed into submission by the threat of layoffs. This will be followed by further attacks on the Welfare State as the recession really sets in and the financiers demand reductions in government spending. As international competition intensifies for fast diminishing markets, and all efforts are put into export industries, the price of consumer commodities will soar, and rationing will be introduced. Food ration cards have already been printed.

The Labour Party will also fall in behind the Tory strategy. There is already talk of a National Government to meet the crisis. Emmanuel Shinwell — one time Labour 'left' — has stated in a radio interview that only a National Coalition Government can 'save the country' and that he would support such a move.

There must be no illusions about Labour's will or ability to fight. Those who call for a general election to return a Labour government are peddling dangerous ideas. Capitalism demands anti-working class policies be carried out, and Harold Wilson will be just as willing to betray the working class as Ramsay MacDonald was.

## THE WORKERS' STRATEGY

If the ruling class succeeds in its offensive the working class movement will be set back years and the scale of the defeat will be greater than that of 1926. This crisis makes absolutely clear that the fundamental issue is the question of power. The only way open for the working class is to engage in mass industrial action to bring down the government, and to create new organs of working class power.

For the miners the continuation of the overtime ban is pointless. There must be an all-out strike. The miners must not fight alone. Engineers and railwaymen must also take strike action. Scanlon must not be allowed to get away with the disastrous tactics of selective strikes and overtime bans — tactics made more absurd by the fact that most of industry is on a three day week. National strike action is essential. There must be unity at all levels in the struggle. The strong sections

pull in other workers for an all-out general strike to smash the Tories.

The TU leaders will do their utmost to head off the struggle and sell out the workers. Workers must organise independently now. Local action committees of militants and socialists must be set up to organise for a general strike in their areas. As an immediate aim these committees must ensure the support of the mass of the workers in the struggle. The long term strategy must be to create workers' committees to take control of all places of work and to establish local workers' councils democratically-controlled organs of workers' power — which lead the onslaught against the bourgeois state and lay the foundations for a libertarian communist society.

ORGANISE FOR A

GENERAL STRIKE NOW.

EDITORIAL OF THE O.R.A. DELEGATE CONFERENCE



# DEMOCRATISE THE RANK & FILE.

Once again, the twice-yearly meeting of the Rank and File National Committee is over and the IS leadership have won a marginal victory over the tendencies fighting for democracy in the NUT Rank and File Group.

As reported in the July/August issue of Libertarian Struggle, the Executive Committee (EC) of Rank and File, a group within the National Union of Teachers, are prepared to go to quite extraordinary lengths of about face and bureaucratic manoeuvre in order to retain their control over the membership.

At the last National Committee in June, a constitution that had been in use for many years suddenly became 'draft' and was precipitately amended so as to cut membership control of the organisation down to a subordinate and trivial level. (National Committee is a delegate body set up to co-ordinate and initiate policy between the annual meetings of the sovereign National Conference.) Not content with this, IS members declared that National Conference was also to be delegated in future. A delegate conference is obviously necessary when a group grows large enough, and is also more democratic in that all sections of the membership are given an equal voice and not excluded by geographic or financial considerations. However, delegation goes hand-in-hand with a proportional representation system. Unless all opinions held by the membership are fairly represented, delegation merely becomes the steamrolling of any minority opinion by the majority.

One thing needs to be made clear to IS - until they trust the membership of the group, and while they continue to treat them as pious fodder, the Rank and File Group will not grow and will not gain credibility with the overwhelming majority of union members who remain unimpressed by Rank and File posturing. In fact, membership has actually dropped in the London region despite a large groundswell of dissatisfaction and militancy over the part-time education issue. This is an indication of the sickness which the leadership refuse to recognise in their short-sighted determination to keep hold of the reins.

In the recent 'Perspectives' document drawn up by the controlling Executive Committee for the membership, they actually state that 'at first, the role of the supporter (all Rank and File members are called 'supporters' so as not to antagonise the Executive Committee of the NUT into expelling the Rank and File Group for dual membership) was seen as being one of helping the paper financially plus, once a year, electing the EC and determining in broad outline the policy of R and F'. They state that this has now changed - which is not true - but for a group to actually see membership of a rank and file organisation in the above terms is very indicative of the low regard they have for members' involvement.

Another example of this disregard for the membership which occurred at the most recent National Committee meeting in December, was when a motion was passed instructing the EC to 'appoint a sub-committee of the EC to prepare a draft version of a new 'Teachers' Charter'.

'ter'. Amendments suggesting the draft version be submitted to the next annual Conference for discussion and acceptance/rejection, or that a specially convened conference discuss it, were rejected and it was left open to debate just exactly what control the membership will have over the final version. No procedure was set up for the document to be circulated to groups - it is obviously going to be yet another document given to a docile membership prevented from having any say about its content. Just like the 'Aims and Principles' of R and F, just like the pamphlets 'Democracy in Schools' and 'Education for Society' (pushed out under the R and F tradename) - all presented as 'facts accompli' to a membership not entrusted with any say in them.

As a final kick in the face to the idea of participation in the 'Teachers' Charter', a member present who asked to be on the sub-committee drawing up the draft 'Teachers' Charter', for which an open invitation had been issued at the National Committee ('If you want to be on the sub-committee, give your names to Jon Hoo-er at the end of this meeting'), was asked 'What experience do you have? If you want to be on the sub-committee, you'll have to apply in writing to the NC and they'll consider it'.

For a group supposedly concerned with democratising the NUT, there is very little democracy shown by the R and F leaders.

It is also indicative that at the National Committee meetings, the following motions were defeated:

'The NC rejects the attempt of the R and F NC to redefine the aims and principles of R and F as decided by groups nationally and published in R and F 21 without reference to the membership. As socialists, we recognise the legitimacy of debate within R and F and on subjects wider than education, NUT and trade union activity. In particular, we demand that democracy be seen to be done and that the conference on Ireland, as constitutionally called for, be held.'

LOST: 29 to 39

This R and F NC calls for the reversal of the Bradford resolution calling for a delegate National Conference and calls upon the NC to submit the question to the next annual Conference.

This motion was amended to read:

This R and F NC recognises that as the National Conference is the supreme body of Rank and File and only the National Conference is competent to define itself as a delegate Conference, the NC thus notes that the next annual conference will not be a delegate conference and that the Bradford resolution will be discussed at that conference.'

LOST: 31 to 48

'Voting for the election of delegates to National Conference will be conducted on a proportional basis by a system of transfer vote.'

LOST:

'Voting for the election of members of the National Committee will be conducted on a proportional basis by a system of transfer vote.'

LOST:

Once again, all the motions dealing with the democratisation of Rank and File are defeated, though the size of the minority is a clear indication that there is a growing struggle to smash the IS-led bureaucracy. It is essential that rank and file groups are not viewed as 'a cog which IS will turn' or 'a united front of socialist teachers' but as the organs of workers' democracy in the trade union movement that will finally transform the labour movement as we know it today.

These syndicalist principles of workers' control and democracy must be fought for against all those who wish to abuse and use them for their own ends. It is the struggle for these principles that is now being fought in the NUT Rank and File Group.

Julie Sharpe

## ROBIN BLACKBURN: THREATENS COURT INJUNCTIONS

Robin Blackburn, leading militant of the International Marxist Group has recently threatened court injunctions against several bookshops in this country. Playing another role besides that of revolutionary, he represents the interests of the publishing house New Left Books. His behaviour brings into question his adherence to a number of principles which any revolutionary would deem a necessity.

On Monday 26th of November, Blackburn walked into 'Books' of Leeds and scabbled through the many shelves looking for a cheap paperback reprint of Althusser's 'Reading Capital'. Insulting various people who worked there, he shouted 'Found it!' when he eventually came across a copy. Compendium and Betterbooks, two London bookshops, had already been threatened with court injunctions by New Left Books (of which Blackburn is a

director). The injunctions were to prevent the sale of this cheap £1 paperback. N.L.B. publishes a hardback edition at £3.85.

Shouting 'Look - it's bookshops like you selling cheap left-wing books that makes our books so expensive. You are killing the demand for Marxist literature,' Blackburn left the shop. Besides Blackburn's confused logic in reasoning that cheap books kill demand, it is clear that he and the rest of the directors of N.L.B. are determined to keep the prices of revolutionary literature at inflated levels.

When presented with this accusation Blackburn replied - 'We produce our books for academics. They can afford them.'

A principle of revolutionary politics is begged by Blackburn's actions. Do you publish propaganda and agitation to provide a distribution for the widest possible audience, or do you publish for a market and 'academics'.

Are New Left Books doing their work for profit or are they working for revolutionary ends?

From Blackburn's words and deeds it is clear that they are determined to prevent any cheap imports of their editions being sold, just so as they can be kept in business.

On enquiry, it was found that N.L.B. considered these principles of widespread agitation to be 'populist crap'. Libertarian Struggle was told by Fred Halliday, another 'militant' director of the company, that N.L.B. 'would not use court injunctions if we don't have to, but we're not afraid to use bourgeois law.' When asked the reasons for stopping the import of cheap editions of left-wing books, he stated that 'these cheap book importers are objectively agents of U.S. imperialism, undercutting the market.'

Bourgeois notions of markets and their maintenance are the basics of Blackburn's and Halliday's publishing practice. Blackburn's

dual role as publisher and I.M.G. 'militant' brings the pursuit of profit into conflict with revolutionary politics. The Gery Lawless affair (over his false claim that the I.R.A. was responsible for the London bombings) brought home to all sections of the revolutionary movement, including many I.M.G. members, the dishonest nature of the I.M.G. leadership as they tried to cover up Lawless' job in the Press Association - making money from a false scoop. Now we have Blackburn mixing business with politics and actively preventing the widespread distribution of revolutionary literature in order to protect prestige markets. The I.M.G. can hardly claim to be a credible organization while its leadership's other interests, hobbies and businesses are being constantly revealed.

Bob Campbell.

## SUBSCRIBE TO LIBERTARIAN STRUGGLE

**£1 For Twelve Issues**

I enclose a cheque/P.O. for £1 as a subscription to LIBERTARIAN STRUGGLE.

NAME.....

ADDRESS.....

LIBERTARIAN STRUGGLE, 29 Cardigan Road, Leeds 6.

make all cheques/P.O.s payable to ORA General Fund.

## ORA groups & contact addresses

If you think that the direct control by working people over all aspects of their lives is worth fighting for...

If you think that what's needed now is independent rank and file organisation linking all aspects of working class struggle - in housing, schools, women's rights, in work, and all others.

If you think that the independence of these organisations must be defended from takeover by the Labour traitors, union bureaucracies, and the 'NEW leaderships' If you think that an organisation is needed which fights for revolutionary politics in everyday struggles but has no intention of seizing power for itself.

THEN JOIN THE ORA! LOCAL GROUPS.

Glasgow: Gordon Sykes, 32 Queen Elizabeth Square, Glasgow C3.

Hull: Marion McCartney, 13 Colman Street, Hull.

Lancaster: Joe Thornberry, 56 Norfolk Street, Lancaster.

York: Neil Hunt, 24 Moss Street, York.

Leeds: Trevor Savage, Flat 3, 35 Richmond Road, Leeds 6.

Manchester: Les Smith, 277 Kingsway Park, Davyhulme, Umston, Manchester.

North London: Doug Durrant, 68a Chingford Road, London E. 17.

There are also contacts in: Andover, Birmingham, Colchester, Dundee, Edinburgh, Harlech, Liverpool, West, East and South London, Newcastle, Norwich, Oxford, Poole, Reading and Swansea. If you want to be put in touch, write to Terry Green, at the York Group address.





# general strike

## Lessons from 1926 for 1974?

With talk of a general strike in the air, it is absolutely vital for socialists and militants to learn the lessons of the 1926 general strike. We must understand why the massive display of working class solidarity with the miners finally ended in a disastrous defeat for the working class movement and the eventual starving out of the miners who were forced to return to work on the employer's and government's terms - a reduction of wages and increase in hours.

Why were our brothers and sisters defeated in 1926? What was the balance of class forces? What were the ideologies of the combatants? Why did the rank and file allow themselves to be sold out? Most importantly, what must we do to avoid repeating the same mistakes?

When socialists raise the question of class consciousness, they are usually referring to the class consciousness of the working class. What many socialists forget is the class solidarity and militancy of the bourgeoisie. In the period of social, political and economic crisis which followed the first World War and culminated in the 1926 general strike, the British ruling class defended its interests in a militant, circumspect and ruthless fashion.

Unlike the reformist leaders of the TUC, the bourgeoisie and its direct political representatives the Conservative Party knew exactly what the struggle was about - a decisive confrontation between capital and labour in conditions of capitalist crisis. Baldwin mobilised the forces of the state, the bourgeoisie and petit bourgeoisie to combat the inevitable proletarian challenge. He even backed down on 'Red Friday' because as he later explained 'we were not ready'. The Organisation for the Maintenance of Supplies was established - its aim was to organise those citizens who would be prepared to volunteer to maintain supplies and services in the event of a general strike' i.e. to scab and smash the strike. More direct tactics were also used. Twelve leading Communists were arrested in the autumn to get troublesome elements out of the way for a few weeks.

By the spring of 1926 the bourgeoisie was in a position of such strength that it felt it could defeat the working class and paralyse

the trade union movement for years. Once the strike started, the full resources of the capitalist state (operating under the legal cover of the Emergency Powers Act) were used to win the propaganda war and smash the strike. The Tories set up the 'British Gazette' while the police and armed forces were used to move supplies and increasingly to defeat the strikers by the use of violence. At Liverpool, two battleships, three destroyers and a troopship were stationed in the Mersey for the duration of the strike while baton charges on crowds was a common sight. Armed troops escorted by armoured cars broke through the mass picket at the London Docks.

So much for the reformist illusion that the state is neutral and somewhat above society.

But what about the leaders of the working class movement, the trade union leaders - surely they too were mobilising their supporters for the inevitable confrontation? The truth of the matter is that they did nothing. Up until the last moment they were attempting to come to some sort of compromise with the Tory Government. Once the strike started, their major aim was to limit, inhibit and de-escalate the struggle. They were absolutely terrified of the militancy of rank and file trade unionists. Thomas, the General Council's General Secretary, gave the game away when he later commented 'What I dreaded about this strike more than anything else was this, if by any chance it should have got out of the hands of those who would be able to exercise some control.'

The TUC continually stressed that the confrontation was economic and not political, thus ignoring the fact that a general strike is implicitly revolutionary - a general strike poses the whole question of power. Their ignominious capitulation to the government, leaving the miners to fight alone, and Thomas's declaration 'I have never disorganised that, in a challenge to the constitution, God help us unless the government won't be fitting epithets to the spineless treachery of these class collaborators. We must recognise that these class collaborators cannot be trusted. In the event of a general strike, militants and socialists must be active in forming broadly based Councils of Action and develop these into our own organisations of working class power. Only then can we win a general strike.

Elizabeth Black

made the point in his influential pamphlet 'The Workshop Committee' that it is mistaken - if understandable - to accuse trade union leaders of treachery. The real point was that they occupied a different social position, and that the new social position meant that their interests were ultimately different from those of the rank and file members.

Nevertheless, militants never really learnt the lesson that the trade union leadership is a bureaucratic caste which vacillates between the bourgeoisie state and the working class. The direct social interests necessitate their taking an antagonistic position towards the workers' revolution. After all, hadn't they shown their mettle in 1919 when the res puse to Lloyd George's question 'are you ready to take over?' was abject defeatism.

From that moment on said Robert Smillie, the miners' leader, 'we were beaten and we knew we were.'

This fatal relationship with, and dependence on, the General Council meant that revolutionaries could not take full advantage of the situation, they were unable to argue for the institutional and organisational forms of working class power which could have challenged the bourgeoisie state. The CP's most militant demand was 'All power to the General Council' and this at a time when a situation of near dual power existed in the North East, when various Councils of Action were forming defence groups to protect pickets from police attacks, and when various workers were beginning to take offensive action e.g. mass picketing and the derailling of a scab train at Cramlington.

In the present situation there is an inherent tendency towards a general strike. Militants must not repeat the mistakes of those in 1926. Any organisation for a general strike must be developed independently of the trade union bureaucracy. We must recognise that these class collaborators cannot be trusted. In the event of a general strike, militants and socialists must be active in forming broadly based Councils of Action and develop these into our own organisations of working class power. Only then can we win a general strike.

The miners' struggle is developing towards the most decisive confrontation that the Tory government has had to face. As the miners' claim threatens to shatter Phase 3 and leave the government policy in ruins, we see vast preparation by the government to build a campaign against the miners.

The fight will be by far tougher than the 1917/72 strike. The Tories now consciously see that if the miners wreck Phase 3 the result will be an international distrust of the British economy, a run on the pound and a continuation of massive trade deficits.

### 'LAW AND ORDER'

The margin of confidence of the bourgeoisie investors and profiteers is at its thinnest in the present economic climate. If this government cannot hold the working class down on the wages front, the bourgeoisie will panic and a collapse of the stockmarket will follow. The ruling class will use the media to blame all on the working class and the Tories will hold a 'law and order' election on the basis of 'who governs the economy.'

The Phase 3 legislation is the stopline over which no mass body of workers will be allowed to cross. This is Heath's ruling. He has made it quite clear that those who wish to challenge Phase 3 challenge the 'democratically elected representatives of the people; Her Majesty's Government.' His economic policy hinges on Phase 3. The only bending of this policy that will be allowed, via negotiation, will be strictly within the 'special cases' or 'special cases' categories that are allowed in the Pay Code.

### LESSON ON THE FIREMEN'S STRIKE

The Code can not only be bent; it can be broken. The firemen's strike and the subsequent wage settlement was labelled a 'special case' by the government and it was presented to the rest of the working class as such via the media. The firemen's rise broke the Phase 3 Pay Code not as a 'special case' but because the firemen took sufficient action that moved the government to pay them. Phase 3 was forgotten because a panic broke out among the bourgeoisie over the issue. An scabbing fire chiefs and army 'drafts' failed to cope with fire after fire, burnt-out warehouses and shops were presenting frenzied investors in insurance companies with the spectre of a flood of claims. The ruling class slander campaign, that the firemen's strike was causing people to die in fires, was dropped as soon as the flames licked up the bourgeoisie's property. The demands of the firemen's claim were met, in spite of their treacherous union leadership, and Phase 3 had had a small hole punched in it. The government had been unprepared and the trade union movement watched the results. The firemen became a 'special case' and a battery of ruling class ideology was opened up for the trade union leaders at Downing Street, in order to convince them of this. It is this 'special case' ideology on which the government hinges all its plans to use the leadership of the National Union of Mineworkers (NUM) and its allies at some future point of the struggle. How much of a 'special case' the miners are will be the point around which the NUM Executive hope

### THE N.U.M. CLAIM

£35 minimum surface workers  
£40 minimum underground workers  
£45 minimum underground (higher grades)  
Plus an extra week holiday

### THE N.C.B. OFFER

£27.50 minimum surface workers  
£30 minimum underground workers  
£32.50 minimum underground (higher grades)  
Plus an extra day holiday



# MINERS CLAM

to negotiate.

## ROLE OF THE NUM EXECUTIVE

On the 26th of November, the campaign of the National Coal Board (NCB) started. Every national newspaper carried large advertisements purchased by the NCB outlining their pay offer. The NUM replied on the 30th of November with a campaign as widespread as the NCB's. It was this advert that revealed the true attitude of the NUM Executive. The NUM advert stated that they were trying to stop men leaving the pits at the rate of 600 a week and their case ended with the plea "Our claim is not based on greed. It is not an attempt to run the country or kick out the government. We are just recognising the facts of life."

The NUM Executive is not willing to take on the government. It will try and present the miners as a 'special case' and hold back the call for strike action as long as possible, and continue with the overtime ban. The moderates in the NUM Executive are led by Gormley, and they have to face the 'left' on the Executive which holds the overwhelming majority. These 'lefts' outspokenly represented by Lawrence Daly are watching the government to see if they are weakening. The threats from Heath and his preparations for a strike and his ability, at this stage, to whip up a slander campaign against the miners, are the barometer by which the oscillating Executive will judge the time to take strike action. As Heath is firm, the Executive will move to compromise. But there is another force which the NUM will have to respect, and that is the NUM membership which grows stronger each day in its determination to win the whole claim. They will force the NUM Executive to act. More and more of the NUM membership reject the apoliticism of the Executive's desire to settle via the 'special case.' With the 3-day week imposed by 'the energy crisis' and the massive cut-back in electricity supply, Heath will use this to whip up a campaign against the miners. The Executive will try not to move to a strike ballot when they next meet in mid-January. The membership must push their Executive to action, for it is clear they cannot win their claim without smashing Phase 3 or without bringing down the government, and that can only be done by strike action.

## GORMLEY SPEAKS

"National Interest means a lot to miners"

"As a moderate it means there comes a time when I must say to the militants enough is enough let us negotiate"

December 15th 1973

When the miners' strike occurs, we will see a collision with the government that will make the Salfrey Coke Works demonstration (in 1971/72, a large police contingent was smashed by massed pickets) and so the plant

was closed to scab lorries) a regular occurrence outside every power station in the country."

## STATE VIOLENCE

As the government loses its ideological slender campaign it will increasingly turn to use force and violence to break the strike. Anti-picket squads of police are being specially trained for this role. The miners' strike will bring about direct confrontation between the rest of the working class and the state.

## SOLIDARITY

In this atmosphere, anti government feeling will run high and it will be then that the possibility of an alliance with the engineers and the railwaymen can be made. It will be the miners' struggle and support for it that will force Scallan (AUEW) and Buckton (ASLEF) to fight with the miners. The pressure from their membership to do so will be tremendous. The recall of the TUC General Council in this period for the calling of a General Strike against a government using police and army violence against the miners is a demand that must be prepared for now. Militants in all industries must discuss these possibilities and prepare for them. In this intensification of the class struggle, the TUC leadership, every union bureaucrat, every 'left' leader, and every Labour politician will act against the miners and those in solidarity with them. Their long-standing treacherous role will be emphatically revealed.

## WORKERS' COUNCILS

At some stage in the fight against the government, it will be absolutely necessary to break from the traditional institutions of the labour movement. Workers who are fighting with the miners must form Action Councils, made up of delegates from trade union branches and strike committees, separate from the TUC. The struggle cannot be won without the formation of independent workers' councils.

Now is the time to smash the Labour bureaucracy. It can only do if every militant uses the coming lessons to show clearly to all workers the role of their leaders who have held their trust for too long.

BOB CAMPBELL.

## Interest

Since nationalisation, the N.C.B. has paid out over £600 million in interest charges. It has released capital into private hands for investment in the profitable "growth" sections of the economy. Last year alone, it paid out £351 million in interest.

# The grants campaign left turn

The Left made substantial gains at the recent NUS conference at Margate, particularly over the crucial grants' action campaign. Conference, in supporting the IS dominated 'Left Alternative's' call for a national rent strike and the censure of the executive for its mishandling of the campaign, pledged itself to more militant tactics this term.

Nevertheless, this is no guarantee that militant action will actually occur. The internal split within the executive is there for all to see. The two IS members of the executive face a 'Broad Left' coalition of four CP members and their five allies, while the remainder of the executive usually follow Randall and have no consistent position. Randall himself veers with the dominant wind. Much to the CP's disgust he voted for the 'Left Alternative' resolution on a national rent strike. We should not be misled into thinking that this indicates a conversion to militant politics as far as Randall is concerned. He wants to be re-elected at the next conference, and is desperately looking around for a new basis of support. At the moment the tide is running in the Left's favour; he could just as easily turn to the Right.

It is equally important to ensure the participation of the weakly organised sections in the technical colleges and colleges of further education. We must stress the importance of building local grants action committees with representatives from different colleges in an area which can really help with the problems of those students in these weak sectors in terms of finances, facilities, etc. It must be made clear that there will be no backdown on any of the demands of the campaign. Right wingers within the student movement will attempt to defuse the campaign by putting forward the suggestion that university students should forego grants increases in order that the weaker sections - those on discretionary awards, unsupported mothers, etc. - can get more. This is a standard right wing play designed to split those in dispute, and must be firmly resisted.

To assume, however, that the adoption of militant tactics and the establishment of rank and file control of the campaign will lead to victory is simply naive or mistaken. Militancy, alone, is not enough. The campaign must be given political direction. It must be placed in the context of Phase 3 and links must be for-



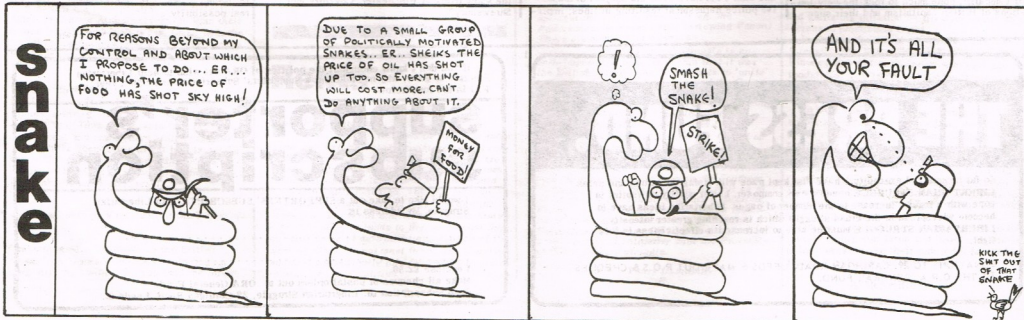
PRESTON GRANTS DEMONSTRATION, NOVEMBER

The executive is so split that even if it wanted to mobilise real support for the demands of the campaign (which is doubtful for the majority of the members of the executive) it is unlikely to be in a position to do so. Militants will have to use the weight of the conference mandate to organise for direct action in the colleges this term - including rent strikes and occupations.

We have to realise, too, that the key to any sort of meaningful campaign lies in the active participation of the mass rank and file of the student body. It is necessary to take control of the struggle from the student union bureaucracy and place it in the hands of rank and file grants action committees, directly answerable to the mass of the students.

ged between the students' struggle and the workers' struggle against the Tories' pay laws. The 'student-worker solidarity' platitude must be turned into a fighting reality by giving financial and physical aid to those workers fighting the government. Anti-Phase 3 fighting funds must be established at all colleges, students must help strengthen picket lines, colleges occupied to provide accommodation for flying pickets. Students cannot win their demands by pleading as 'a special case' and by confining agitation to a 'fair grants now' campaign. Only when the Tories are brought down through mass direct action by workers can any real advances be made, and in this students have an important role to play.

Peter James





# IRELAND THE FORGOTTEN REVOLUTION

*Editorial note: The following article is written by a member of the Official Republican Movement. It does not reflect ORA policy. However, we welcome such contributions and hope that readers will reply to the points raised.*

Those actively engaged in the Irish struggle feel a deep sense of isolation. TV pictures from England show demonstrations in support of the revolution in Chile, Vietnam, Palestine and so on, but rarely do people in Belfast or Derry see mass support for their struggle in the streets of British cities. Much of this is, of course, due to the highly effective censorship and blatant distortion of Irish news in British papers and to the historical disinterest of British people in the Irish question.

Still the most common comment is 'Bring out our troops and let them get on with it!' It is not as simple as that and even the most crass analysis will point to the reasons why. It is because Ireland is economically valuable and because a defeat for British imperialism in Ireland could have grave consequences for the balance of society in this country. On all this the British 'left' is in agreement, but little has been or is being done to lend support to those in the front line in Ireland or to bring home the truth of the situation to the British people.

A starting point with most people, including those who like to see themselves as a part of that nebulously defined 'British left' is to force people into asking themselves why the Irish situation is so violent and bloody. By violence what is meant is the whole range of violence, not simply those events associated in most minds with the Provos. What caused ordinary and unorganised working people to take to the streets in 1968, 1969 and so on? What caused these people to put their homes, families and lives at stake in hand-to-hand conflict with armed police, B-men, and later the British Army itself? What fundamental sickness in Irish society is there that prompts a generation of men and women to organise and die in the ranks of one of Western Europe's most efficient urban guerrilla organisations, the Provos? Contrast such commitment and revolutionary dedication with the apathy of a British general election, where a 75% poll is a high one, a poll which neither injures nor harms any of the participants. There is no risk in going out to vote. Contrast the Irish involvement with the limp excuses for non-attendance one has heard so often on the 'left' or in trade union circles. When this point is won home, when the Irish people's efforts on behalf of all workers crushed by the British imperialist machine is acknowledged, then progress can be made to lending unconditional support to those elements of the struggle genuinely furthering revolution and comradeship criticism made of those elements holding back success.

Without entering the full emotion of this debate, let certain commonly held illusions about both groups be knocked down. Firstly, the IMG theory that the Provos are in the vanguard of the armed struggle against British imperialism. It is without doubt that the Provos have, through their campaign, done much to rock the very foundations of British capitalism and their suc-

cesses (not least, spectacular ones like Four Square, Seamus Twomey, and so on) have a great impact on all those in opposition to capitalist societies. On the other hand many, many people in Ireland have through the continuing and often pointless campaign been divorced from the struggle, become war weary and reluctant to engage the British at any level. Popular sympathy abounds, but genuine popular support is lacking. The second illusion is that the Sticks are filling in the political gaps and creating a genuine revolutionary party. To a great extent, they are achieving the socialisation of their members and are even forging links, however tenuous, with the Protestant side. They are also remembering that the Irish struggle is a 32 county issue and that success will not come merely when British troops are withdrawn and the border abolished, but only when the workers and small farmers effectively control the total Irish economy along socialist lines. To this extent, almost alone, Official Sinn Féin bore the anti-EEC campaign in Ireland. On the debit side, however, is confused leadership, a slowness to react to events and denial of armed struggle, fatal in terms of the support of Northern Republicans. Again, though they have had the courage to abandon 'traditional' Republican values and attempt to forge new policies to forward a revolutionary programme, British groups should order An Poblacht and the United Irishman and analyse the Provo and Sticky policies.

## THE STRUGGLE IN BRITAIN

So far, all Irish support groups in Britain have failed to survive changes in the situation, being split by the falling-away of the Civil Rights type of supporter and then being prey to the intestine disputes of IS, IMG et al, none of whom have shown any real grasp of events in Ireland anyway. A mass movement must be built, if necessary on issues that the British can identify with, such as a 'Withdraw the Troops' campaign. The trade union and labour movement must be encouraged to understand and debate Ireland. Republican speakers must be invited to meetings and discussion forums held. A new organisation, the Trade Union Committee in Support of Workers in Ireland, is attempting to do many of these things, but is seriously handicapped by lack of funds and contacts. What is really needed, if even this type of group is to succeed, is a new attitude on behalf of the British 'left'. Ireland is on the doorstep - it is always the struggle that should have priority after your own.

## REPRESSION OF IRISH MILITANTS

Clann (Stickies), Sinn Féin (Provos) are always willing to supply speakers and to organise schools on Ireland and to supply details of contacts and outlets in Ireland for funds or even simple messages of solidarity. Perhaps the Prisoners Aid Committee typifies most closely the problems confronting these organisations. Since the bomb campaign in Britain, Clann and Sinn Féin have been the subject of massive police harassment resulting in fines, imprisonment and a sinking of morale. The worst sentence so far is of 30 years on Noel Jenkinson. Isolation has been more pronounced since the recent SAS/M6 inspired 'campaign'. Amazingly, the response from the left and the trade union movement has been minimal. This highlights the problems of the 600-700 men interned in Long Kesh and Crumlin Road, the hundreds lifted in Mountjoy, Port Laoise and the Carragh. We are having to fight with one hand behind our back.

The British establishment obviously fear mass support from this country. This means that they have to be more careful in concealing what actually happens to internees and political prisoners, who are now getting worse treatment than that received by their counterparts in Aden and Cyprus. Nevertheless, the police in this country have benefited, as Brigadier Kitson predicted they would, from the technology of terror worked on poor Paddy. When will the British activists realise that the time to defend themselves is now. Nevertheless, the police in this country have benefited, as Brigadier Kitson predicted they would, from the technology of terror worked on poor Paddy. When will the British activists realise that the time to defend themselves is now, when the technology is being tried on the Irish? How long before there are regular midnight raids on British activists? When were the police first issued with CS gas? How long have they been trained to use snatch squad tactics against demonstrators and pickets? What difference is there between the illegal holding, questioning and interrogating of the so called Belfast 10 and the treatment received by the comrades at Shrewsbury? Similarly, what difference is there between the show trials at Winchester, Coventry and Shrewsbury?

British workers must be shown the identity of interests between themselves and those in Belfast, Derry and Dublin. The Protestant worker in the north of Ireland must be forced to face the quandary of his identity crisis by resolutions, and resolutions from British trade union and left groups telling him that he is Irish and that his enemy is British imperialism, and its native gommeen collaborators in Dublin and Belfast, be they orange or green.

This can be done by:

- (i) British groups and trade unions establishing links with political groups in Ireland, exchanging delegations, ideas and literature.
- (ii) British groups burying their sectional interests and promoting Irish co-ordinating committees in each town to promote meetings, demonstrations and activity.
- (iii) Propaganda must be aimed at the working man not the student or experienced activist.
- (iv) Massive opposition must be voiced against the treatment of Irish political prisoners and the harassment of activists for the Irish cause.
- (v) Pressure must be put on Labour MP's, however irrelevant this might seem, as by this method the widest possible cross-section of opinion is canvassed.
- (vi) British groups should seriously examine their attitudes to the Irish situation and ask themselves what real attempts they have made to contact either wing of the Republican Movement. Ireland is not 2000 miles away and trips to Ireland for schools and information are a real possibility.

Briege McKeown

If you don't know enough of the politics of ORA but wish to help Libertarian Struggle to grow, why not take out a Supporters' Subscription at £2.50 a year. Fill in the form below:

## supporter's subscription

I would like to take out a SUPPORTERS' SUBSCRIPTION to Libertarian Struggle. My address is:

.....  
.....  
.....  
Make all cheques or postal orders out to: ORA General Fund.  
Send subscription to: Libertarian Struggle, 29 Cardigan Road, Leeds 6.

## THE PRESS FUND

So far income and expenditure have just kept pace with rising donations and sales. LIBERTARIAN STRUGGLE needs a new composer, better quality newsprint to cope with a regular increase in the number of pages. Libertarian ideas have to become widespread in the class struggle which is reaching greater intensity. LIBERTARIAN STRUGGLE must be able to increase its effectiveness in this fight.

DONATIONS TO 29, CARDIGAN ROAD, LEEDS 6. MAKE OUT P.O.S & CHEQUES TO THE O.R.A. GENERAL FUND.



# Letters



## MIDDLE EAST WAR

Dear Editor,

Next time you're reading a newspaper or watching the news and the Arab-Israeli conflict comes up, then just remember that:

- Although extremist Arabs give the number of Arab refugees as 3 millions, in fact there were only about 1 million Arabs living in Western Palestine in 1947 and about half of these preferred to stay in Israel
  - about 1 million Jewish refugees were taken in by Israel from Arab countries while wealthy Arab rulers kept Arab refugees in concentration camp conditions as an excuse for war and political blackmail, and have preferred to spend their vast sums on armaments and propaganda rather than use any of their immense wealth on the alleviation of distress or on the raising of the living standards of the Arab masses.
  - As British capitalists and bureaucrats preferred making the oil billionaires and motor tycoons richer rather than giving a living wage to miners and railwaymen, mines have been closed, railway lines axed and energy requirements have been geared to oil rather than coal and nuclear power
  - as a result the oil sheikhs while still keeping the Arab masses in poverty have been able to again, at the expense of the workers, an increasing hold on stock markets and through the power of advertising and of the companies they control to influence the British press.
  - ninety per cent of the news you read and hear is biased in favour of Arab fascism and feudal rulers and a good deal of the remainder comes from the right wing of Zionism
  - the truth is that in order to keep the rate of production down to the rate at which they can invest their ill gotten profits the oil sheikhs have needed a crisis and a war as an excuse for the oil squeeze.
  - Left wing Israelis have always worked for Arab Jewish unity and against the imperialists who fought against the establishment of Israel and are now attempting to destroy Israel
  - before and since the partition of Palestine, left wing Zionists have worked for a bi-national state, but the United Nations preferring the policy of divide and rule forced through a partition between a Jewish state which became Israel and an Arab state which was annexed by Jordan
- B. G. Dalton

Taking your points in order:-

- Actually it was 1 1/2 million. What you omit to mention is that this number constituted more than 66% of the total population of Palestine. Since 1947 more Arabs were driven from their homes in 1956 and 1967. This, taken with the fact that populations tend to increase - even in refugee camps - makes the number up to three million.
- We agree that the Arab rulers are corrupt, but has Israel a policy of accepting any Jew who wishes to immigrate to Israel? The Falasha community of Jews in Ethiopia (one of the most feudal and reactionary states in East Africa) have been trying to get into Israel for years. Unfortunately for them their skins have happened to be black. Consequently they have been refused entry into Israel.
- Very true but is this the fault of the Palestinian? No.
- Concerning Arab influence in the British press. The Zionist lobby in Britain has far more influence with the press (and the three

major political parties) than the Arabs. The blatant pro-Zionism of the media is obvious. A claim that 90% of what we hear is pro-Arab is just not true.

- are you suggesting that the only reason for the war has been to give oil sheikhs an excuse to reduce oil production? The main reason for the war (on the Arab side) was to head off the rising internal discontent with the existing Arab regimes.
- it is true that some Israeli left wingers fight imperialism but the rest of what you say is untrue. The US has used every means possible to help the Israeli territorial expansion, and without that aid the Israeli State would collapse. Britain and France in 1956 supported Israel to the extent of invading Egypt. The USSR voted for the establishment of Israel in the UN in 1947. Even now Russian policy is ambiguous when it comes to the demand of re-establishing Palestine.

- so it was the UN and not the Zionists who wanted to partition Palestine? This is a falsification of history. Presumably, this is the reason, you would advocate, as to why the Israelis seized large areas of Arab land in 1948 after the original partition lines were drawn up by the UN and used the Stern gang to terrorise the Arabs into leaving their homes.

Editorial Group

## SW conference

Dear Comrades,

I was interested in your report of the recent Socialist Worker conference. Writing as a delegate to the conference, I thought your report reasonably fair. However, it hardly dealt with the part of the conference that was really worthwhile. This was when speakers from the floor - the ordinary trade unionists spoke of their day-to-day experiences at work which led them inevitably into conflict with union officials. It was also surprising that you didn't mention the Shrewsbury 24 speaker who told how when they picketed one site, they were met by the bosses' son carrying a loaded shotgun. I've not seen this reported anywhere in the left press. There were other items of information which you didn't print.

Surely your paper should be carrying the opinions and aspirations of the ordinary rank and file militants and not lengthy descriptions of the speeches of Cliff - we can read this in Socialist Worker.

Yours, for direct workers' power,

B. McKinley

## Rents

Dear ORA Comrades,

Readers of your November issue may well have been confused by the contradictory political conclusions of the article 'Rents: Legalised Theft'. As the contributors of the original article, such confusion would seem to us fully justified. The article we presented of State housing policy within the context of an overall anti-working class State offensive directly leads to the conclusion that existing forms of defensive organisation of the working class cannot meet the State offensive, and that consequently this represents a crisis in working class politics.

By substituting your own conclusion that they are in fact adequate to the task, and that tactical recommendations can resolve such a political crisis, you effectively knock on the head all the key organisational and political questions raised for the working class movement by this analysis.

Hence our conclusion of IS (and ORA) that uncritical defence of current forms of working class struggle effectively depoliticises these struggles by acting to reinforce increasingly inadequate versions of what the struggle is fundamentally about.

What is needed at this point is the debate, a debate through which the revolutionary potentialities of the struggle can be recognised and built upon.

Yours fraternally,

Giles Oliver,  
on behalf of East London Anti-Rents Group,  
7 Queensgate Villas,  
Victoria Park Road,  
Hackney, London E.9

In the November issue of Libertarian Struggle, which was edited by ORA (N. London), an article appeared entitled 'Rent: Legalised Theft'. Although this article was based on an article provided by the East London Anti-Rents Group, it did not throughout reflect the opinions of this group, having been edited and its conclusion rewritten. N. London CRA apologises for any misleading impressions that resulted from the juxtaposition of this article and an advertisement for a pamphlet put out by the East London Anti Rents Group.

Furthermore, as it appears this group were mistaken in believing that material provided by them would not be edited or rewritten (as was the case) we must also apologise for this.

N. London ORA

## Ireland: support for Provos

Dear Comrades,

With regard to R. Sandell's letter in December L.S.I would like to make a few points. His criticisms of certain declarations and actions of the Provos exhibiting eg. racism, are accurate, and obviously these aspects are to be deplored. But to let such facts take precedence over the central struggle in Ireland is morally and tactically incorrect. Anyway, R.S. should be aware that the reactionary views of some Provos are not those of them all. For example, Gerry O'Hare, formerly part of the Provo leadership and now in prison in the South, is a left-wing socialist. Also one finds an increasing revolutionary consciousness amongst the younger Provos. (eg. the Andersonstown Provo paper reviewing Fanon) There are many other examples.

The Provos' struggle is an anti-imperialist one. It is true that it was the British ruling-class's attempts to 'unite' Ireland in the 1960s that provoked the Orange reaction and the present crisis. But surely no libertarian socialist would be stupid enough to let that military struggle against Britain's imperialist armed forces be not harmful to imperialism's interests. Out of an anti-imperialist struggle an explicitly revolutionary struggle can arise, but not separately. Our main criticisms of the Provos must be their failure to involve the Southern working-class in the struggle, as well as at all times the reactionary aspects R.S. cited. We have to see Ireland in terms of an imperialist relationship since the 17th century. Consequently, I hope ORA soon changes its policy to one of solidarity with the Provisional IRA's military struggle.

Yours fraternally,  
R.

# FEW

**THE THREE PHASETRICK**: a handbook on inflation and phase 3. Counter Information Services sixth anti-report. Price 30p from - C.I.S. 32, Shattbury Ave, London W1.

"Since November 1972 the growth of real incomes has been held back whilst prices and profits have soared. These trends will continue under Phase Three.

We document what has happened to prices, wages and profits since the governments present policy was introduced; we demonstrate that the causes of the present inflation are rooted in our economic system and we conclude that the policy cannot succeed in its professed aim, to restrain inflation by controlling wages, prices and profits.

What the policy may succeed in doing, if we let it, is to hold back the living standards of wage earners to the benefit of profits. The profiteers will be shielded from the consequences of the inflation which will continue unabated. This we believe is the policies real objective."

## 'HEATH'S CONCERN'

This pamphlet completely exposes the Tory governments prices and incomes policy, and shows that the state pay laws amount in fact to a disguised wage cut. Wages as a proportion of total incomes have fallen while profits have increased substantially. Meanwhile price rises, particularly food, have continued to bite into the real wages of workers. For example, a manual worker with two child ren on the average industrial wage of £36.20 in October 1972 would have received a net increase of only 5.4%, which is under the norm of £1 plus 4%. This is a period when prices rose 9%, and the cost of basic foods even higher.

But what of Heath's alleged concern for the lower paid? Surely if all those greedy dockers were to have their pay rises curbed the lower paid would benefit as the rate of inflation slowed down? So Heath's public relation argument runs.

In fact the plight of the lower paid has worsened during Phases 1, 2 and 3. They pay a far greater proportion of their incomes on basics - food, heating, rents etc., which have risen more rapidly than anything else. Moreover, the fact that the lower paid are poorly organized means that they cannot fight effectively for even nominal wage rises. Many workers in this sector are also subject to the poverty trap by which wage rises are often followed by welfare cuts, thus leaving the worker in a worse condition than before. Even the Financial Times has commented that the lower paid sections are worse off - pointing out that "to cover the rise of more than 10% in living costs which this group has suffered he would need to raise his gross pay by 18%".

## CRISIS RIDDEN

Inflation must not be seen as some blemish on the otherwise immaculate face of capitalism but as a natural result of declining, crisis-ridden, stagnating capitalism which is characterised by a decline in productivity, a decline in capital investment in important sectors of the economy and galloping inflation as firms no longer absorb increased production costs.

In Britain the spiral of inflation has been intensified by E.E.C. entry, V.A.T., the Housing Finance Act and speculation with raw materials and foodstuffs. The real point for the Tories is not to control inflation but to ensure that British capitalists don't have to pay for it.

In this they have had much success. The sullen acceptance of Phase 3 and the defeat of those sections of workers who challenged the restrictions of Phase 2 necessarily meant that capital benefited at the expense of labour. With wage levels held down the bosses have had a field day. The increase in profit levels has been phenomenal. The % increase per employee rose dramatically when compared with the June 1971 - March '72 period.

Phase 3 too will be characterised by inflation, cuts in living standards and boosts for profits unless workers use their industrial power to smash Phase 3 and kick out the Tories.

Al McNeillie



# CHILE: 'NEW LESSON' TO BE LEARNT AGAIN

The fascist coup resulting in the massive defeat of the Chilean working class in September of last year had been expected for months. It was the direct result of the reformist policies of Allende's Unidad Popular government.

The three years of Allende's office made apparent precisely what the implementation of such a limited and reformist programme like that of Unidad Popular would mean: compensation for the international monopolies; appeasement for the national bourgeoisie; exhortations for greater productivity and restrained consumption directed towards the workers.

Throughout his reported statements Allende stressed the willingness of the UP leadership to 'exercise the law and compensate in fair manner'. With the knowledge that over a period of 40 years the copper industry alone drained 40% of Chile's national wealth, compensation for assets expropriated from international corporations was to take the form of annual cash instalments paid over a period of thirty years plus interest. This contradicts the statement of Allende, made in his first Annual Message to Congress: 'The agreement with American industry has shown once more that the government is giving a fair deal to foreign capital without renouncing the basic interests of our nation'. However, such contradiction is nothing when compared with the marxist stances and actual political practice of the Unidad Popular coalition when faced with the 'threat' of revolutionary expropriations by the Chilean workers, and that of a relatively unified ruling class with the support of the armed forces.

The fear of alienating powerful sections of the bourgeoisie as a result of 'ultra-leftist' acts like mass factory occupations, seizures of land, etc. posed the question of survival of the first 'democratically elected marxist



PEACEFUL ROAD ENDS HERE

government' in no uncertain terms. Either a working class inspired by the prospect of real socialism would push the UP leftwards until, in the face of the reformists' reluctance, it would be swept away or transformed under the weight of the workers' demands, or - with a split existing between the government and its mass base - the ruling class would seek to re-assert their rule by crushing the workers and peasants left undefended. In just this

situation, the CP/PSU coalition under Allende sought to woo the middle classes and the military - precisely those sectors who participated in the coup. Such a decision was not made within the context of a politically backward working class which could not be 'trusted' with power. On the contrary, the Chilean peasants, considered backward by President Allende, went much further than the land reform policies of Unidad Popular - essentially a continuation of those started by Frei and the Christian Democrats - by taking over the large estates.

The attempted coup by Col. Souper in June 1973 provoked a major upsurge of militancy within the working class who occupied more than 500 factories in Santiago alone. They had to fight against both the owners and the bureaucrats of the government who opposed many of the occupations in terms of legality under bourgeois democracy. Widespread sabotage of the Chilean economy by threatened middle classes (such as the October 1972 strike by the lorry owners) which were meant to undermine UP's popular support in fact awakened the masses to the necessity of building their own organisations. So too did the inevitable clashes with the landowners and factory bosses, since the government could 'always' be relied upon to act in the interests of the bourgeoisie. The UP policy in the face of large scale land seizures by the peasants was made clear by Allende in a speech delivered, aptly enough, in the Plaza de la Constitución: 'It is not we who have used the government to transgress the law. Whenever an estate has been occupied we have gone immediately and tried to reason with the farm workers'.

The demands and aspirations of the Chilean masses were constantly pushing beyond the pathetic reforms upon which 'socialism was to be founded' in Chile. This awakening of revolutionary consciousness completely shattered the rigidly formulated transition to socialism envisaged by UP.

Through the workers' struggles against the reaction of the right and the reformism of the coalition, there developed the 'cordons industriales' - assemblies of delegates elected from local factories - which could have founded the base from which an out-and-out attack on the capitalists might have been launched. Indeed, the workers in the cordons came quickly to the realisation that armed defences were necessary. However, the attitude of the Allende regime was wholly antagonistic. Workers were arrested for the expropriation of farms and factories, the Chilean Communist Party would allow none of its members to participate in the cordons until mid-August 1973 - harassment came from every side. These factors, plus the mystifications about the Chilean armed forces

'professionalism' and national as opposed to class character peddled by UP slowed down the developing awareness of the need for an armed and organised working class. With full knowledge of the existence of armed landowners on estates in Cautin, Bio-Bio and Malleco provinces Allende declared: 'I have stated categorically that I do not want Chilean steel to be wrought into weapons with which Chileans will fight other Chileans. We want our steel to be made into picks, hoes, hammers - tools with which to work'.

Despite attempts on an international scale to present the Chile 'experiment' as an indication of the manifestly bankrupt strategy of the CP the real lessons of the military takeover must be learnt and used - not least by the workers of Chile who continue to struggle in spite of the state repression and previous disillusionment under Unidad Popular. The disillusionment was well under way months before the coup took place. The failure of the UP government could not be hidden when everyday inflation was attacking the living standards of a people already living in poverty, when the black market flourished and continued to supply the wealthy, when the government supposedly 'laying the foundations for socialism' clearly moved rightwards - negotiating even with the Christian Democrats who, at their most leftward extreme, advocated a meal-mouthed version of workers' participation acceptable even to Tories in Britain - and inviting the 'professional' Chilean army to participate.

The success of the coup d'etat was not an inevitable result of the balance of class forces as some have said. What was inevitable was an armed clash between the bourgeoisie and the working class in which large sections of the army lower ranks could be expected to side with the workers and peasants. It was this that Unidad Popular failed to see and failed to prepare for. Doubtless many of the Unidad Popular militants who have somehow escaped the butchery and imprisonment realise this mistake all too late and are now fighting the Pinochet junta. The failure was so obvious before the coup that it may yet prove to be the most helpful feature of UP's rule insofar as such an awareness may have given the opportunity to prepare for the inevitable, prolonged guerrilla war which will be waged by the Chilean workers.

SOLIDARITY WITH ALL ANTI-FASCIST FORCES

VICTORY TO THE CHILEAN WORKING CLASS!

John Bowie  
Published by ORA, from 29, Cardigan Rd., Leeds 6. Printed by Anyway Litho, 252 Bristle Rd., London S.W.9. 6AQ Tel 01-274 2432.

## Publications

**Organisational Platform of the Libertarian Communists.** (ORA pamphlet) advance orders to D. Young, 91, Burghhead Drive, Linthouse, Glasgow.

**Mole Express** Manchester voice of revolutionary struggle. News/reviews/exposés/graphics. Features. 10p monthly from 7, Summer Terrace, Manchester M4 5WD.

**The Tyranny of Structurelessness** by Jo Freeman. Obtainable from Leeds Women's ORA. 29, Cardigan Rd., Leeds 6. 5p plus 3p post. *'Libertarians in all movements should study this pamphlet because it contains the core of the argument that ORGANISED libertarians have stated.'* Review in April Libertarian Struggle.

**Front Libertaire** fortnightly paper of O.R.A. France. Sample copy from North London group, subscription details from 33, rue des Vignoles, 75020 Paris, France.

**De Vrije Socialist** paper of the Dutch Libertarian Socialist Federation. For copies write to, Jan Bervoets, willems de zwijslaan 104, Den Haag, Netherlands.

**Inside Story** the radical magazine which specialises in the stories Fleet St. won't print. For a sample copy send 25p to Dept. AP 20, 3, Belmont Road, London S.W. 4.

**Solidarity**, a paper for militants in industry and elsewhere. 6p, plus post from 123, Latham Road, London, E.6.

**Street Research** for practical, grass roots research. Issue No. 2 on researching an individual, No. 3 on researching local authorities and the legal system. 15p per copy plus: p. postage to S.R.B., 80 Raiton Rd., London S.E. 24.

**Gay Group:** Any comrades interested in discussing the formation of a gay group in ORA please contact: Martin Baillie, c/o 56, Norfolk Street, Lancaster.

## FOR INFORMATION ON ORA WRITE TO

**24 Moss St, York.**

## ARTICLES, SUBS, ORDERS FOR

LIBERTARIAN STRUGGLE TO BE SENT TO

**29 Cardigan Rd, Leeds 6.**

## PUBLIC MEETINGS AND EVENTS

**MANCHESTER AREA REVOLUTIONARY ANARCHISTS**  
FORTNIGHTLY PUBLIC MEETINGS, THURSDAYS, 8.00pm  
LASS O'GOWRIE, CHARLES STREET.

**GLASGOW ORA**  
MEET WEDNESDAYS, 8.00pm  
IONA COMMUNITY, 114, CLYDE ST.

**N. LONDON ORA**  
LIBERTARIAN STRUGGLE DISCUSSION GROUPS. CONTACT GROUP SECRETARY. (SEE PAGE 3)

**LEEDS ORA**  
DISCUSSION MEETINGS, CONTACT GROUP SECRETARY (SEE PAGE 3)



No12

FEBRUARY 1974

5P

# libertarian struggle



FOR WORKERS POWER



paper of the Organisation of Revolutionary Anarchists



# THE BEDS

'Hospital Worker' was formed just after last year's ancillary workers' strike and has mainly revolved around the paper of that name. The money for the publication was originally lent by the International Socialist print shop - it has now been paid back. It would be true to say that IS had quite a part in setting the grouping up - although not completely.

It's development up to now and in the future will depend on the way IS decide to behave, (see their heavy-handed attempt to monopolise NUT Rank and File and make it into the IS teachers branch.). So far, they have allowed other groupings to have a voice in the organisation and Hospital Worker remains a genuine rank and file group.

The 'Hospital Worker' Conference on January 12th was attended by 50 trade unionists. It started off with a discussion on the lessons of the last year. The left-wing inside NUPE had demanded a rise to raise hospital workers' wages to £30 and the right had demanded a rise to bring the wage up to £25. The executive had accepted the right's proposals.

Many workers remained ignorant on the in's and out's of the pay claim; no copies on the pay award being circulated in the areas by the Head Office. Alan Fisher, General Secretary of NUPE, will say that the offer has been democratically accepted by the membership, something with which union militants would not agree.

A steward from Portsmouth spoke on the private patient ban in his hospital. He said that the tactics against the private patient system was to remove staff from the private patient wards to handle NHS wards - there was a 50 per cent staff shortage. He also mentioned the food problems at Portsmouth.

A speaker from the floor told the conference of the private patients ban operating at St. Georges. There was also the problem of agency staff at this

## ABOUT 'LIBERTARIAN STRUGGLE'

This paper is written and produced by militants all over the country, who are active in their trade unions, tenants' associations, claimants' unions, women's liberation groups, schools, colleges and universities.

We are united by our membership of the ORA a democratically organised group, which fights for a libertarian communist revolution. This means a revolution brought about, and firmly controlled by, the working class. This is the only foundation for a society in which production is for need, not profit, free from exploitation and oppression.

The only way working class power can express itself, is through workers' councils in the factories and through neighbourhood councils in the communities. Demands for improvement in workers' living standards, whether wages, better housing, etc. are not purely economic demands. The working class must make each demand a move towards the control of production and the control of their own lives. Therefore every organisation and struggle of the working class must be directly and democratically controlled by the workers and parties who take the initiative and control from the working class.

As part of our attempt to put this kind of politics into practice, we have rotating editorship of each issue of this paper. We produce the paper (most of us are professional journalists) to provide one means of spreading some hidden facts, of publicising what workers are thinking and doing, to workers in other industries, and other parts of the country, to talk about what claimants, women, immigrants, pensioners and school-kids are doing, and to show how these battles can be united.

We won't give you the familiar shit about, 'this is your paper'. What we do say is: -USE this paper, -pass on what you've learnt, -contact others in a similar situation.

We know that lots of people have no practice at writing articles - but who needs literary genius? An essential factor in the development of the working class movement is the communication of details and the lessons of its various struggles.

The editorial group producing this paper wish to state that signed articles do not necessarily represent national ORA policy.

**WORKERS' POWER - NO SUBSTITUTE!**

hospital - the union branch had presented an ultimatum over this to the administration and they had backed down. As from now there will be no agency staff at St. Georges.

At this point a member of NALGO ACTION addressed the meeting about the need to build links between public sector workers. A ballot had been taken of NALGO members, of whom 50% had voted, the majority of whom were against industrial action, but for an overtime ban over their pay claim.

The conference continued in this fashion, with many speakers from the floor talking of their experiences in their local hospitals. The necessity to break through Phase 3 was underlined. The NUPE leadership has manoeuvred to get the membership to accept the pay claim and 'Hospital Worker' must increase its influence in order to stop Fisher and his cronies settling away with this gain.

It was also to be noticed that the hospital workers there who happened to be members of the International Marxist Group or Workers Fight, two Trotskyist groups, were pushing for liaisons with other workers in struggles. Whilst these links must certainly be encouraged, we feel that these militants were spending all their time on these issues rather than militancy in the place of work. This is vitally necessary if 'Hospital Worker' is going to grow as a rank and file group.

One speaker pushed for the setting up of Shrewsbury 24 defence committees in each hospital. We feel that this is extremely impractical - solidarity for the 24 must be based on union branches and the defence committees would become isolated, as well as the fact that militants are very thin on the ground and this would take up all of their time.

While IMG talked of support action for the miners - joint action, demos, etc - the IS line was much more related to the situation - ie the necessity of building a mass struggle by the ancillary workers against NHS reorganisation, with the increased attempts at hospital closures, - against Phase 3 - against the employment of agency staff - against bonus schemes (which will worsen!) - against bonus schemes which will lead to more and more attempts to make work methods more productive, with a subsequent rationalisation of the NHS.

It was the duty of militants to take the fight against hospital closures to the rest of the organised working class, to build up effective shop steward organisation, with the long term programme of democratising the unions. In as far as not capable of mass struggle, it was necessary to make this possible.

The growing police-army collaboration was talked about, while one speaker pointed out that hospital workers were productive workers, the finished product being the fit patient.

## CAMPAIGNING NOT WORKING IN THE CLASS

Again and again, the IMG were talking about militancy outside the job, and in this they were misunderstanding the real nature of the struggle. The development from the class basis of their organisation, predominantly student, emphasis on campaign politics rather than work inside the working class ultimately influencing the outlook of their working class militants.

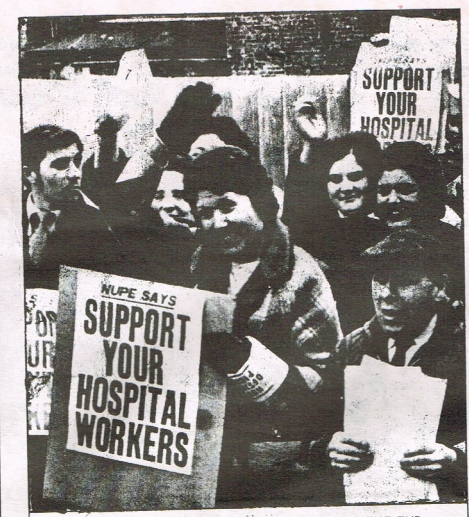
A speaker from the threatened Poplar Hospital in London's East End talked about the campaign there. She pointed out the fact that there were no NHS buildings in the East End, the fact that the wards were packed, and that the casualty hospital was closed down this despite the fact that 25,000 people would be moving into the East End and there was a building programme under way.

A miner from the 'Collier' rank and file paper also addressed the conference and talked on the need for a mass rank and file conference. A conference on this question was being held on March 30th in Birmingham. The IS is backing the conference all the way. It is being initiated by the various rank and file papers in which the IS has a foothold.

Undoubtedly there is a need for a mass rank and file movement, but as several speakers pointed out the movement must not be under the control of any one political group. IS will be asking that SOCIALIST WORKER be a paper adopted by the movement. This attempt to turn a rank and file into the backwater of a political organisation must be fought at the conference tooth and nail by all those who believe in the self-activity of the working class.

The editorial board of 'Hospital Worker' was then elected by the conference - including an ambulanceman and a nurse - thus hopefully increasing the likelihood of articles about these sectors, rather than material predominantly on ancillary workers.

At this stage we, feel that all militants in health work should support 'Hospital Worker' and help it become an active force in working class struggle - that is while it remains a genuine rank and file group with full democracy where no one political group has dominance.



LAST HOSPITAL WORKERS STRIKE - FIGHTING TO THE END

Text of the Leaflet Prepared for the Hospital Worker Conference by Hospital Workers in ORA.

## TEND LEFT

"Following the defeat of the ancillary workers' last strike in the Spring, militants realised the need for a common organisation and means of communication across the unions in the NHS. Out of this grew the Hospital Worker. The first Conference attracted over 50 Trade Unionists. Since then it has attracted more hospital workers. Sales have increased. And it has improved as a means of communication."

It has still a long way to go before it becomes significant as a force in the Health Service. It failed in its attempt to mobilise people in the fight for the £25 basic claim. As it grows, it will be able to do so more successfully. To do so, it is going to extend its campaign to democratisation of the unions. It must also move from support of rank and file actions to taking part in their initiation. This involves it becoming an active rank and file organisation instead of mainly a newspaper-selling network.

The main battle of 1974 is evidently going to be over so-called NHS reorganisation. It's main purpose is to turn the Service into a safety net for those who can't afford private patient schemes. They are rapidly expanding, helped by us as taxpayers. They are advertised specifically as 'bringing workers and management together'. The NHS was won by years and years of bitter working class struggle. Like every other gain, this one is getting hammered by the bosses' offensive. In practice, this attack means no building programme, hospital closures, bonus schemes, reduction in staff levels and the rest of it. Low pay will be further reduced by canteen price rises.

Inevitably, an organisation of militant workers is predominantly socialist, but there are different versions of socialism. The only solution to the chronic economic crisis is socialism fully controlled by the working class.

This does not mean it should be a united front of left groups. Nor should it be dominated by a particular left group. If one group is in control, that group will use it for its own policies. We can't rely on any political groups to fight, or to act in our interests, all the time. The only way we get correct policies is by full control by the whole membership. Only this kind of organisation can provide a vehicle for struggles in the coming months."

Published by the hospital workers in the Organisation of Revolutionary Anarchists.

Since its founding in November 1971, the Organisation of Revolutionary Anarchists (ORA) has developed from being a number of anarchists who believed in organisation and away from the morass of the traditional anarchist movement with its anti-theoretical, anti-organisational and anti collectivist bias. It is in the process of moving towards a cohesive practice of libertarian communism, the theory of which was already existing but was swamped by individualism.

In this process a tendency appeared within the ORA which took on the trappings of quasi-Trotskyism. This was because they were divorced from the class struggle, not basing their practice within the working class. This tendency wanted to see the direction of the ORA by its 'most competent and advanced militants', rather than by the full involvement of the membership.

This tendency is now outside the ORA. No doubt the various Trotskyist groups among whom they scatter will grow over this. The Trotskyists and other 'vanguard leaderships' see the death of another left group as more chance of their gaining power. This exposes their commitment to the working class as only a matter of tactics. They are welcome to these people as we may have lost some members but we have preserved our essential commitment to libertarian politics.

We intend from this point to step up our efforts to expand as an effective libertarian revolutionary organisation, as without such organisation the dissemination and triumph of libertarian communist ideas within the working class movement is greatly hindered.

A rank and file militants and a part of the working class, we intend to help in the creation of non-bureaucratic, democratically controlled rank and file organisations from which must spring the realisation that the working class must organise, as a class. This will be expressed in the formation of factory and neighbourhood councils that will challenge the power of the ruling class and its State.

We appeal to all those militants outside of the ORA who believe in the self activity of the working class and the creation of a free classless society to join us in a movement that will aid in the achievement of such a society. North London ORA.



# TENANTS GO DOWN

With the collapse of the partial rent-strike in Oldham, and the rumoured collapse of Kirby's total strike, the militant tenants' actions against the housing Finance Act have almost ended in the North West.

Ended in more or less total defeat, the Unfair Rents are still here. The second round of increases last October provoked only a brief spasm of renewed militancy. None of the local Labour councils - not even those with rock-solid majorities like Wigan or Kirby - have shown any fight. (not that they are likely to!).

These are lessons that can be learnt, which might prove useful next time around. (Although it is unlikely at the present that another major confrontation will blow up on the question of council rents, now that the principle of 'fair rents' has been forced through.

Firstly the media - daily press, radio and TV - played down news of the rent-strikes. They over-emphasised the council's estimates of the numbers on strike, at the same time ignoring or briefly mentioning as claims the counter-estimates of the tenants. Even when a rent-strike in one area was given prominent or sympathetic coverage, eg by the 'lefties' of Granada TV in the N.West, its impact was reduced by its local nature. This meant that there was a disastrous lack of knowledge about similar struggles elsewhere. This makes it unlikely that a national Tenants association, set up and controlled by the tenants themselves, will materialise.

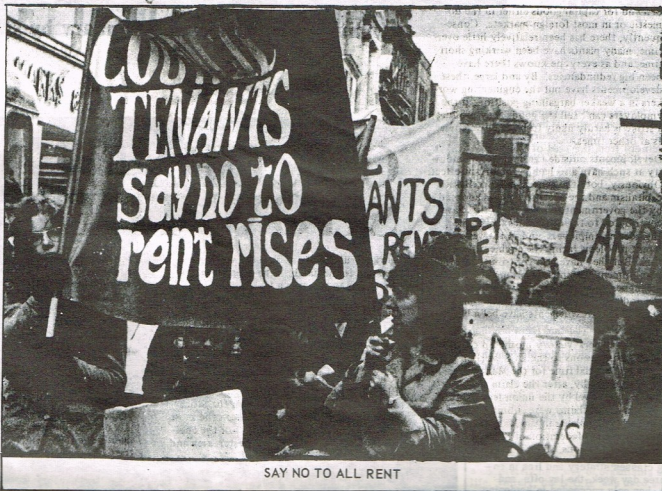
Secondly the tactic of partial rent strike - refusing to pay the increase - has both practical and political disadvantages.

Practically, solidarity is at once lessened because the rents are still paid and therefore nobody except the tenant and the town hall knows who is in arrears and who is paying up. Each tenant is isolated and is often subjected to intense pressure to give up the strike. They are told that they are the last person on the street of estate not to pay; they are sent official looking threatening letters which in reality have no legal force.

Politically a partial rent strike has the disadvantage of implying that the principle of rent-paying is not in question, merely the amount. Resistance merely to rent increases is the same thing as agitation merely for wage increases, with or without ritual denunciation of the Tories.

Partial rent strike is better than total apathy. A total strike not only forces a showdown factor as the collective debt mounts up, and increases the tenants' chance to win, but also starts people thinking about the whole system of paying rent - who profits? where does the rent go? Why are we subsidising the fat lads in the city? And so on.

Thirdly the carrot of Rent Rebate schemes (as opposed to the stick of eviction) has been very effective in splitting up the unity of tenants and ending strikes. A weapon even more effective in the inner-city so-called problem areas (eg Manchester's Hulme and Beswick) where a large proportion of tenants are on Social Security.



If the S.S. pays your rent anyway, the S.S. will also apply the rebate scheme, and there's not a damn thing you can do about it. If you're getting your rebate-deducted rent paid, you cannot withhold your rent.

Finally there was the old bogey of various sectarian groups, each convinced that it was the only correct way forward, who saw the struggle in practical terms of recruiting the 'best elements' among the tenants to their own sect.

For them no objective analysis is possible, as each group is the true workers' vanguard, therefore the workers' (and tenants') interests must coincide with its own. If they don't, it is the workers who are wrong. Bolsheviks regard themselves as being as infallible as the Pope. Manchester's experience was perhaps typical; during the summer of 1972 tenants came in growing numbers to the Greater Manchester Federation of Tenants and Residents as the only available grouping. The GMFTRA, a

relic from the last round of tenants' struggles, was Communist Party controlled, and their idea of militant action was lobbying Labour M.P.'s. Frustrated by the endless meetings which were getting the struggle nowhere, and by the GMFTRA's refusal even to consider rent strikes, a number of tenants tried to change the organisation.

The CP however were irremovable. All their Party tricks were employed to remain in control. Non-CP tenants never seemed to be called on to speak, or had their voting credentials challenged. Eventually after two massive votes of no confidence which the chairman ignored, most of the tenants left to form an Action Committee. Its first priority was to organise a rent strike. The Federation continued to meet. Perhaps it still does.

Unfortunately the Action Committee in its reaction against the bureaucratic structure of the GMFTRA took as its secretary the first person to volunteer for the job. She happened to be a

supporter of the SLL (although nobody knew it at the time). Inevitably she started to use her position in the tenants movement to plug the Workers Press. Not to be left out other groups such as Workers Fight joined in the fray.

## BORING HACKS

And while the tenants were able to prevent the secretary from appearing on SLL rallies as the official spokesperson of the Manchester Tenants Action Group, they were unable to do anything about the endless sectarian bickering which now racked every meeting, with boring harangues from SLL hacks. This as much as anything else put off unsuspecting tenants who came along from poorly organised estates to take part in their first rent strike, and was certainly a contributory factor in the defeat of the strike.

It now seems that the rent strikes against the Housing Finance Act (the Unfair Rents Bill) are over, having collapsed one by one.

ALAN HUGHES

## SUBSCRIBE TO LIBERTARIAN STRUGGLE

**£1 For Twelve issues**

I enclose a cheque/P.O. for £1 as a subscription to LIBERTARIAN STRUGGLE.

NAME.....

ADDRESS.....

LIBERTARIAN STRUGGLE, 29 Cardigan Road, Leeds 6.

make all cheques/P.O.s payable to ORA General Fund.

## ORA groups & contact addresses

If you think that the direct control by working people over all aspects of their lives is worth fighting for.

If you think that what's needed now is independent rank and file organisation linking all aspects of working class struggle - in housing, schools, women's rights, in work, and all others.

If you think that the independence of these organisations must be defended from takeover by the Labour traitors, union bureaucracies, and the 'NEW leaderships'.

If you think that an organisation is needed which fights for revolutionary politics in everyday struggles but has no intention of seizing power for itself.

THEN, JOIN THE ORA!

### LOCAL GROUPS.

Glasgow: Gordon Sykes, 32 Queen Elizabeth Square, Glasgow G3. Leeds: Roger Walker, 98, Shakespeare Court, Leeds 9

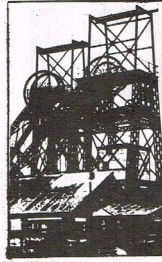
Hull: Marion McCartney, 13 Colman Street, Hull. Manchester: Alan Hughes, c/o 100 Oxford Road, Manchester

Lancaster: Joe Thornberry, 56 Norfolk Street, Lancaster. North London: Doug Durrant, 68a Chingford Road, London E.17.

York: Neil Hunt, 24 Moss Street, York.

There are also contacts in: Andover, Birmingham, Colchester, Dundee, Edinburgh, Harlequin, Liverpool, West, East and South London, Newcastle, Norwich, Oxford, Poole, Reading and Swansea. If you want to be put in touch, write to Terry Green, at the York Group address.





The Tory Government's announcement of a four day week clearly shows that their 2 day lockout was a strategy designed to isolate the miners from the rest of the working class, and to blame them for the present economic crises in capitalism. The ruling class hopes to save itself by inflicting a severe defeat on the miners and by widespread cuts in the living standards of the working class. If the Tories are allowed to implement Phase 3 and the miners are defeated the working class movement will be set back years.

As part of their strategy to isolate the miners the ruling class have used all the means at their disposal to brainwash us into believing that their policies are 'fair and just'. They tell us the miners will receive a 16½% increase, with 26-27 more in their pay packets. The true facts are that if the miners accept the Tories offer they will in March 1974 be just 6p better off than in April 1973. In 3 mths. inflation will have wiped this out and more.

#### HARDENING MILITANCY

The ruling classes' strategy and lies in enforcing the three day week, the lay offs, and redundancies, has only succeeded in hardening the militancy of the miners at local rank and file level. Calls for strike action have been made in Scotland. Miners in the Leicester area (traditionally the least militant area of the miners' movement) struck in protest against Frank Smith's (their N.U.M. area Sec.) call for an end to industrial action. At Cannock there was a strike in protest against 11 men being sent home for refusing to work in a reduced team. Miners in other parts of the area came out in sympathy, despite a call by Jack Lally, the Midland area N.U.M. President, not to support.

The N.U.M. Executive has been forced into a militant position by the rank and file. The overtime ban was called as a result of repeated calls for industrial action at branch and regional level. Past strikes in all industries have shown Trade Union leaders willing to sell out its members for reasons ranging from bribery to fear of prosecution or fear of an undermining of their position in full time jobs, often as lackies of the bosses. Workers in all industries are increasingly realising their power and the cumbersome union

machinery is inadequate to meet their needs. This is borne out in the fact that 95% of all strikes are unofficial.

The 'special case' backdown proposed by the

T.U.C. and the Labour Party panders to the Tory strategy. It is used by the ruling classes to divide sections of the working class and to keep some workers at low rates of pay. If the miners

# VICTORY TO



ITS EITHER A LIVING WAGE OR ITS PHASE THREE

win, because they are a 'special case' who need to preserve their differential, it will have little benefit to the working class as a whole. The T.U.C. leaders have betrayed the working class, like they did in 1926. It has committed its members to unemployment, a lower standard of living and further Tory repression. In 1926 the traitors were Bevan, Clynes and Thomas, today they are Murray, Scanlon and Jones. Scanlon has betrayed the A.U.E.W's £10 a week claim. By saying his aim is to 'Get an offer to the limit of Phase Three, not to break it.' This statement clearly shows Scanlon's role as a scab in directly contravening his own union's declared policy of opposition to the Tory wage control. Jones is also 'anxious to see a settlement or else the nation will be bankrupt.' The capitalist system that produces a state of permanent crisis, that cannot meet our wage demands for fear of declining profits, does not deserve to exist.

#### FORCE THE TORIES

Laurence Daly, National Secretary of the NUM, talking about the strength shown by the miners in their overtime ban, said that 'such unity would force the Tories to resign and win the return of a Labour Government.' A Labour Government that would be pledged to a reformist programme. After all the controversy about nationalising the 25 largest companies, what appears in the Manifesto is a meaningless promise to socialise nationalised industries. As far as the miners are concerned, Wilson has given full support to the TUC sell-out, and has said that he has been trying to help the Prime Minister open a docto-gram in the faces of the working class of this country for the laws of the ruling class. Wilson says, 'the law must be obeyed' Laws that keep down living standards of the working class (Phase 3), laws that suppress rank and file organisations, by fines and threats of prison and laws that ban workers from organisation (Shrewsbury 4 - Conspiracy Law).

All struggles to defend living standards are political struggles. This is clearly shown by the fact that the 3 day week costs £40,000,000 a week and to pay the miners is an attack on the living standards of all the working class. If the miners are defeated the defeat will be worse than in 1926 when working class organisation was suppressed and strikes were virtually unknown for 20 years. Workers threatened with redundancies or cuts in pay must demand full pay, overtime on Saturdays and no layoffs if these demands are not met, workers must strike and occupy the factories.

BERNIE NELSON





# THE MINERS



So once again the miners are set for an all out confrontation with the Tory government. This time (as opposed to 1972) the Tories are a miner propaganda has had some success. The miners have been called 'unpatriotic' and 'in league with Arab oil sheiks'. For their actions and the cry of the press is that they should all be good patriotic citizens and go back to work.

The situation is quite clear—what other group of workers can cause a national 'state of emergency' two days after an overtime ban? What other group of workers have to put up with dark, dirty and dangerous conditions? and with the highest rate of fatal accidents for only £30 a week? A reasonable wage can only be got by working extensive overtime and weekend working. Now the Tories, the very people who have benefited from the recent vast profits, their expense accounts and tax free incomes in the Cayman Islands have the nerve to tell the miners that they can't have more than £2.30.

## NINETEENTH CENTURY

To see the importance of the miners' struggle you have to look at their history. The coal mining industry was the material base on which the whole capitalist industrial machine was built. The miners suffered intense exploitation during the industrial revolution, with child labour, inhuman conditions and low wages. Child labour affected the middle class conscience, but bad conditions and low wages did not. Attempts to organise strikes and similar actions to improve their living standards were ruthlessly put down, as in the 1844 Durham miners' lockout and many others.

Throughout the nineteenth century there were frequent mine accidents and disasters where the dead were often counted in hundreds although more often the number of dead was not sufficiently dramatic to rate a mention. This was regarded in a complacent way as part of the natural order, in much the same way as people today regard people starving to death in Ethiopia. There was a mining disaster at Senghenydd in South Wales in October 1913 where 439 miners lost their lives, in spite of the fact that it was known to be a dangerous colliery. It was this disaster which caused the Daily Herald to run the headline,

'Miners lives at 1sch. 14d each'; at the low fine imposed for criminal negligence on the owners. The fine also covered breaches of the Coal Mines Act. The fine was £240 for 439 lives. In 1910 Winston Churchill had ordered troops in to suppress a long and bitter strike in the Rhonda, ending in the Tonypandy tragedy.

Throughout this time the miners were the hard core of the working class movement. The Miners Federation was the first modern union. Without the miners the Labour party could not have been created. In spite of this the party has repeatedly betrayed those who put their faith in it. To this day the miners provide the most solid block of labour voters, for the very conditions of the industry where you have to trust the next man create a feeling of solidarity and comradeship which leads to a socialist view of life.

The crunch for the miners came in the 1920s. Firstly the mines were old, inefficient, fragmented and run in the interests of short term profits for selfish coal-owners. Thus British coal was 'uncompetitive' compared with German and American coal. Secondly, the dominant Conservative Party was committed to restoring British nineteenth century supremacy with the Empire intact and the pound sterling on the pre 1914 gold standard and all the rest of that crap. So give and take and the ruling class decided it was to be the miners. A policy of systematic pay cuts and longer hours was brought in, and a national lockout was threatened if the miners did not give in. Naturally they refused to give in and the miners' leaders A.J. Cook and Herbert Smith coined the phrase, 'Not a penny off the pay, not a minute on the day'. The miners got the support of other workers throughout Britain, and the government and employers were forced to give way, for a while. The employers withdrew the lockout notices and the government granted a subsidy (Red Friday 1925).

What happened in the next few years is a tragedy of betrayal and defeat. The Tories were clever and ruthless; they bought off the miners for a time and prepared for the kill. A national scab outfit, the 'Organisation for the Maintenance of Supplies' was created. The armed forces and the police were posted for the coming class war against the 'enemy within' the working class. The capitalist press and the newly formed B.B.C. were then (as now) mobilized for a hysterical campaign against the selfish miners for holding the country to ransom, and the old 'reds under the bed' theme was flogged for all it was worth. The whole capitalist state machine was made ready to fight the miners.

When the subsidy ran out, the employers posted notices again, either accept wage cuts and longer hours or 'its a lockout'. 'Nowt Doing' was Herbert Smith's reply, and the miners were out. The T.U.C. were committed to the principle of solidarity action and were forced by workers' militancy to call other sections out. This 'General Strike' as it has become known was far more effective than 'its' leaders had imagined. The workers response was very solid and British industry came grinding to a halt.

The middle-class and student scabs were treated as a joke, (a sick joke at that). It was only when troops were brought in as strike breakers and the police began beating up and arresting strikers that the atmosphere got more serious.

## TREACHERY

The point to remember is that the 'general strike' was a success and was only defeated by the treachery of the T.U.C. General council who called off the strike unconditionally after 10 days without even consulting the miners in whose support it was called.



The dismay and confusion the calling off of the strike caused, just when it looked like winning, is not hard to imagine. Thousands of workers never got their jobs back and the demoralisation of defeat was such that it took the trade union movement 20 years to recover.

## STARVATION

The miners fought on alone for six months in a heroic and bitter struggle isolated and bombarded with calls to give in. It was starvation rather than the Tory Government propaganda which eventually forced a return to work in November 1926.

During the long years of the Depression and then the Second World War the labour movement rebuilt its strength. In 1945 a majority Labour Government was returned and the New Dealism appeared round the corner. There would be no return to the bad old days of the dole queue and low wages.

The hated Trades Disputes Act of 1927 would be repealed. The commanding heights of the economy would be taken into public ownership. 'We are the masters now' said William Shawcross and the workers for once could feel a bit more hopeful. The highpoint of post-war Labour Government policy was the nationalisation of the mines in 1947.

## NATIONALISATION

But from a socialist point of view the nationalization of the mines was incorrect for at least three reasons. Firstly, the parasitic class of mine-owners received £3,000 in compensation when they should not have got a single penny. Secondly, the old system of management was kept intact under a new name. It was the same old bloody gaffer under a new hat, still trying to squeeze as much work for as little money as possible. Socialism must be built from below, based on workers control of all levels of production. It is for the workers to decide what is produced, why, how much and who for. The aim of socialism is not just equality of conditions, though that is crucial, but people taking full control of their lives. It is not state control versus private enterprise, but neither of these — it means a completely new way of organising social life. Thirdly, the N.C.B. was used as a means to a cheap energy policy and as an indirect

# FIGHT BACK

It was obvious that it would not be long before workers began to organise resistance to attempted wage cuts as the result of the three day week. British Leyland shop stewards are preparing a campaign likely to stimulate other groups of workers into similar action.

An unofficial shop stewards committee has been formed from shopfloor representatives of the 56 B.L. plants throughout the country. They make it clear that the fight is not with British Leyland but with the government whose action has created the 3-day week. The shop stewards attack the government for using a 'political weapon' to defeat the miners. They aim to exert maximum pressure on the government to concede the miners pay claim and end the 3-day week.

At British Leyland layoff agreements are limited to a maximum each quarter under separate plant agreements. Although the ceiling varies from plant to plant, most B.L. factories have only a few days left for this quarter. The shop stewards are looking ahead to the point when these agreements are exhausted and wage cuts are made. The campaign will concentrate on demanding five days pay and includes the threat to occupy the factories if the wages are cut.

Since the introduction of the 3-day week, some

workers have used up 6 of their layoff days — of which they get 80% of normal pay rates. So far the B.L. line is that it is sticking as closely as possible to union agreements during the crisis but once it really begins to bite they are not going to continue to uphold agreements. B.L. workers will be forced on to unemployment pay for the days not worked. If the 3-day week continues for another fortnight it will be necessary to take action to defend wage packets. B.L. have made no comment about the shop stewards' action because it is not recognised as an 'official' negotiating body.

It is to be hoped that other groups of workers will have a similarly active response to attempts to reduce wages under the 3-day week. This must be seen in its true light — a political weapon used by a Tory government to isolate the miners and prevent any crack in Phase Three. Trade union bureaucrats are already attempting to 'find a way out' — witness the TUC negotiating with the government on the basis that they will not use a settlement with the miners as a precedent for other claims. Note also Scanlon's statement, in contradiction to his union's policy, that the AUEW will settle inside Phase Three. The only effective and reliable forms of organisation are those of the shopfloor, both to defeat Phase Three and eventually capitalism.

means of subsidising private enterprise. In fact the coal industry became a donkey which got a lot of stick and precious little carrot. The results of these mistakes can now be clearly seen. The N.C.B. was laden with interest payments of over £50 million p.a. which meant that it always had a loss, which proved nationalization to be inefficient, much to the Tories' satisfaction.

## AFFLUENCE

Throughout the fifties and sixties, coal was run down, pits were closed and thousands of miners were laid off. Oil and nuclear power were thought to be the energy of the future — with a modern technological image and a certain novelty appeal. Cars, lorries and a procession and then the Second World War the labour movement rebuilt its strength. In 1945 a majority Labour Government was returned and the New Dealism appeared round the corner. There would be no return to the bad old days of the dole queue and low wages.

JOHN BRAYBROOK



# Ireland: THE WOMEN ORGANISE

Irish working class women have always been doubly oppressed by the alliance of Church and State. In the Republic until just recently this alliance was written in to the Constitution.

In return for the Church's consistent hostility or outright banning of militant political activity, the State supports the Catholic Church's dominant position. The special power accorded to the Church in the Constitution was recently voted out in a referendum with government backing. This was not in any way designed to lessen the hold the Church has, but was part of the deal between London, Belfast and Dublin to try and con the Northern Protestants that a united bourgeois Ireland was to their advantage. In the North, the Church has played the same 'moderate' supporting role. Only when it feared a total loss of credibility by its followers has it criticised fifty years of Orangeism.

As in most Catholic countries, women in Ireland have been the cornerstone of the Church. The Church's traditional dogmas on the family, the subservient role of women, and on contraception has meant a total lack of political activity or concern since at least the end of the Civil War.

## FROM CIVIL RIGHTS TO INTERNMENT

All this began to change in the late sixties when the Civil Rights movement gained momentum. Political ideas were circulating amongst all sections of the community and not even those previously excluded could help but take part. The hierarchy of the Church tried to hold back the movement by appealing for 'moderation', but appeals by priests for moderation fell on somewhat deaf ears when not only the menfolk, but women too were being beaten and clubbed by either the goon squads of the Orange Order or the B. Specials.

Women have taken an active part in the fight against the British Army ever since. Since internment and house-to-house searching, the importance of women in the struggle has become more crucial. The Catholic housing estates have become even more like ghettos than they were... a natural breeding ground for self-organisation and the backbone of resistance. They give as much protection to the armed struggle as it gives to them. Even those unsympathetic to the terms in which the struggle is waged give shelter to those fighting.

Women now form the majority on protest marches, they have engaged in punch-ups with the Army, they send signals all round the estates when the Army is

raiding and they play some kind of role in the armed struggle itself - there are over 60 female political prisoners in Armagh jail.

Encroachment on the power of the State has taken place on a large scale. Rents, rates, payments for gas and electricity have all been withheld. The State cuts off the supply and the people turn it back on again.

Of course the fact that this is so, should not blind us to the fact that the IRA are no great believers in the liberation of women. Their perspectives on any social issues apart from national liberation are practically non-existent and their chauvinism is male as well as national. The importance of the women coming out politically in Ireland lies not in the fact that it is for national liberation or social democracy instead of social revolution, but in the fact that it shows the ability of working people, however previously unpolitical their background, to organise effectively in times of need or crisis. Once the experience of this kind of organisation is assimilated, then struggle round issues that relate to completely changing your life and the system can take place.

MADDY THOMPSON



## REVIEW

ANDREA MARTIN: 'Ukraine, Unrest and Repression'. Published by the Committee to Defend Ivan Dzyuba and Vyacheslav Chornovil, 33 Gregory Crescent, London S.E. 9. 15p.

Anarchists have in the past often exposed the Soviet regime for what it is - a country ruled by a self-perpetuating authoritarian bureaucracy in the name of a long-decayed revolution. At times however, we must feel rather dejected by the seeming lack of response from within the Soviet bloc - until a Hungarian wakes us up.

Even so the Soviet Union itself has seemed quiet, cowed by the Stalinist terror of the 1930s. It is now becoming clear that, after some liberalization under Khrushchov, evidenced by for example, the decision to allow the

## REVIEW..

publication of Solzhenitsyn's 'One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich' in 1962 the Brezhnev regime has gradually tightened upon intellectual dissent, culminating in the suppression of the underground publication 'A Chronicle of Current Events' and its Ukrainian equivalent, the 'Ukrainian Herald', in 1972.

One interesting aspect of the contents of these two publications has been the documentation of dissent by working people as well as intellectuals. This forms part of the pamphlet under review, but the ground has been largely covered in 'Soviet Workers Fight Back' (L.S. Oct. 1973 p.5).

The author also spells out the answer to the question 'why the Ukraine?' After a brief flowering in the 1920s Stalin crushed the Ukrainian cultural revolution. Under Khrushchov, there was a minor revival of this flowering. The Ukrainians are the second largest nationality in the Soviet Union, yet the author details evidence of discrimination against them both within the Ukrainian SSR and in the rest of the Soviet Union. There have been protests, and significantly not only from a nationalist standpoint.

Two Ukrainians in particular, Ivan Dzyuba and Vyacheslav Chornovil, have written critiques of the current Soviet regime with particular emphasis on the policy of Russification and on civil rights issues, respectively - from a Marxist-Leninist viewpoint. The authors go back to Lenin's time and pose the questions: how has Soviet society changed since Lenin's death and how far does official theory currently concur with practice? Their answers\* are skillful and devastatingly critical: an official reply for distribution abroad only - was printed in answer to Dzyuba's main work. This was necessary because both authors were attacking the fundamental Soviet thesis that, apart from a few excesses by Stalin, the present government and party leadership are the ideological heirs of Lenin.

Dzyuba, who has TB, has been released following a recantation in print after KGB pressure. Chornovil has served almost a year of seven in prison then five in exile. They are our comrades and deserve all the support we can give them. The first task is to publicise their conditions and that of others, like them, languishing in the prisons and labour camps of the Soviet Union. As a first step I would urge all readers to read the pamphlet and distribute it as widely as possible.

MIKE MALET

\* DZYUBA: 'Internationalism and Russification'. London 1970

\* CHORNOVIL: 'The Chornovil Papers' London 1968

## THE PRESS FUND.

So far income and expenditure have just kept pace with rising donations and sales. LIBERTARIAN STRUGGLE needs a new composer, better quality newsprint to cope with a regular increase in the number of pages. Libertarian ideas have to become widespread in the class struggle which is reaching greater intensity. LIBERTARIAN STRUGGLE must be able to increase its effectiveness in this fight.

DONATIONS TO 29, CARDIGAN ROAD, LEEDS 6. MAKE OUT P.O.S & CHEQUES TO THE O.R.A. GENERAL FUND.

If you don't know enough of the politics of ORA but wish to help Libertarian Struggle to grow, why not take out a Supporters' Subscription at £2.50 a year. Fill in the form below.

## supporter's subscription

I would like to take out a SUPPORTERS' SUBSCRIPTION to Libertarian Struggle. My address is

.....

.....

I enclose £2.50.

Make all cheques or postal orders out to: ORA General Fund.

Send subscription to: Libertarian Struggle, 29 Cardigan Road, Leeds 6.



# SPAIN

## RELEASE SALVADOR

On January 9th a Spanish court martial in Barcelona sentenced a young Anarchist to death, for killing one of Spain's fascist police. Salvador Puig Andich, aged 26, was found guilty of 'terrorism', resulting in the death of the policeman. He was sentenced to an additional thirty years! — for a bank robbery. This would be served if the death sentence were, perchance, to be commuted.

Comrade Salvador's two codefendants also received vicious sentences. Jose Luis Pons Lovet, aged 17, was sentenced to thirty years imprisonment for his part in the robbery. Like Salvador, he was an Anarchist member of the banned Iberian Liberation Front. Maria Augustas Mateos Fernandez, aged 16, and who denied being an I.L.F. member, was sentenced to five years in prison for her alleged part in the robbery.

The one chance for these victims of savage fascist repression now is that the sentences have to be reviewed by higher military authorities.

The last official executions took place in the early sixties with the guillotining of anarchist workers Delgado and Granados.

## FRANCO'S JAILS

Of course these sentences are nothing new for those comrades in Spain who fight back against the dictatorship. Salvador and the other two's sentences came just a few days after the trial of the ten men charged with organising the 'Commissions OBERAS' (the communist party front). Hundreds of anti-fascists are in Franco's jails at the moment, many Anarchists among them. We must show our solidarity with those in the Spanish resistance movement, especially those in jail and facing death. They are there for us, we are out there for them.

## SOLIDARITY WITH THE SPANISH RESISTANCE!

\*\*\*Send donations to the Spanish Resistance Fund, c/o 84b, Whitechapel High St. E. 1.

## WIPE OUT BLANCO

The assassination of Admiral Luis Carrero Blanco, Spain's Prime minister, is to be greeted with approval. While the capitalist press will undoubtedly whimper about this 'terrorist' act we fail to see them doing the same over the systematic terrorism practised on the Spanish workers for the last 35 years.

The execution of thousands of anarchists, socialists, workers and peasants; the death of thousands of others in prison from hunger, beatings and disease marked the triumph of Franco at the end of the Civil War. The labour movement was crushed.

Since then militants have fought back, organising the illegal unions and fighting in a guerrilla war against the fascists. Many were killed and others sentenced for up to 30 years.

Blanco was said by many to out-Franco Franco in his slavish devotion to the Caudillo: —

'I am a man totally identified with the work of the Caudillo, doctrinally formed in the principles of his national movement and in the fundamental laws of the kingdom.'

The assassination was met by the Communist Party in Spain and in Britain with disapproval. In Spain they have always kept within 'legal boundaries' and in their policies they represent little more than the left of the liberal opposition. An interview with their General Secretary made out that the assassination was somehow engineered by the regime to justify more repressive policies.

The repression at present taking place in Spain is shown by the trial of the Carabanchel 10, the leaders of the Workers Commissions — the Basque freedom fighters who so efficiently disposed of Blanco have strong links with the illegal and semi-legal workers movements.

The struggle of the Spanish and Basque workers is increasing. This is all the more important at a time when Spain attempts to present a 'liberal' image in order to enter the EEC.

# no place to go

On April 1st (All Fools Day), the 1972 Local Government Act comes into force. This is supposed to make local government more efficient and richer. It represents the same trend to centralisation of capital as do takeovers in the private sector — add one big company to some little ones and it adds up to more of everything (except jobs.)

As in takeovers, the electors, like the workers, have no say at all. Sometimes sporadic protests at one area being taken under the wing of a city force the council or government to take notice. This hasn't happened much, despite the claims made by the Redcliffe-Maud report on local government reorganisation that the new super-Corporations would give more opportunities for 'grassroots participation', mainly on such vital community issues as the siting of bus shelters. Even this hasn't happened.

## CREATE A LUMPEN

An interesting point about the new Local Government Act, which goes well with the Tories appalling housing record, is the removal of responsibility on local authorities to provide accommodation for any homeless person. From the creation of the Welfare State, the Council had to provide you with a roof over your head.

Naturally, some Councils have always ignored this and got away with it. Families were put on buses or trains for the nearest big city. Single homeless people have hardly ever been helped, even in big cities. Shortage of money was the usual reason for not providing houses for the homeless.

## CAMDEN BACKDOWN

Recently Camden Borough Council after union-backed pressure from social workers found 50 extra units of accommodation for homeless families, after first claiming that they had neither enough money or accommodation.

After April 1st, Councils can provide housing for the homeless if they want to. There has been a campaign against this led mostly by groups like Shelter. It looks as though they may have some success in reversing the provisions of the Act to make it a duty for councils once more.

However this temporary victory if it comes about will not be the end of the fight that all sections of the working class are going to be in over housing. Tory attacks aren't just straightforward ones on the wage packet. The Housing Finance Act was passed to stop councils underselling private landlords, as well as to ensure that all services return a profit. This combined with the cost of buying houses, the fact that less houses were built in 1973 than any postwar year, the 20% cut ordered in local government expenditure, all mean that the number of homeless families looks sure to increase.

## THE CLAIMING CLASS

The system is creating a whole new 'claiming class' dependent on FIS etc, and caught in what is termed the 'poverty trap.' The creation of this class takes away the need for wage increases and ensures a ready pool of lower-paid workers that can be used if necessary to undercut the organised working class.

In this situation it is vital that traditional attitudes that only feckless families become homeless be combatted. All working people face the threat of this happening, especially in the current economic and political attack by the bosses. There are not enough houses to go round in Britain. There were 16000 homeless in 1962 and 28000 in 1972.

The ruling class hopes to take away all the gains won by the working class in the last fifty years. As a class we must fight for our right to housing, as much as we fight for our rights to strike, free medical care, to organise, to picket. To pass from defence of our rights to attacks on their privileges will need the strength of all sections of the working class.

## NATIONAL FRONT

SWASTIKA = NAZI FRONT SWASTIKA

As has been previously pointed out in this paper, the National Front has been attempting to improve its image. It wants to appear respectable and denies that it is a Fascist or Nazi party.

Quite recently, its National Chairman, John N. Tyndall (sample quote Mein Kampf is my doctrine' and 'The Jew is like a poisonous maggot feeding on a body in an advanced state of decay') wrote to the Sunday Telegraph complaining of an editorial (18.11.73) in which was written '...authoritarian Right-wing organisations like the National Front...'. Tyndall objected to being called 'authoritarian'.



His comments in the January 1974 issue of Spearhead on the miners struggle (What We Think - Leaderless Britain) shows him and his organisation he purports to lead, in his and their true colours.

After expressing, just like the Tory and Labour leaders, his 'sympathy with the miners as a whole', he writes: 'The first task of national leadership when the crisis began

was to move emergency legislation through the Commons which would have given the Government special powers to act against the disrupters of industry. This legislation should have enabled the Government: —

- To impose on industry a system of compulsory arbitration for a specified period
- To assume powers of detention of any union leader who sought actively to sabotage the effort to get industry moving in the crisis.
- At such time as the need for compulsory arbitration may be considered to have passed, to impose the law of secret ballot among all union members in the decision whether or not to work.
- To compel the instant dismissal from all posts in the trade union movement of individuals with a record of past or present membership of Communist organisations.

So Tyndall removes the mask of 'respectability' to reveal the ugly face of not just the authoritarian Right, but the vicious anti-working class face of avowed Fascism.

The National Front must be exposed for what it is — authoritarian, Fascist, and anti-working class and pro-capitalist.

## WE HAVE BEEN WARNED



Under the guise that they are protecting us from Arab terrorists, the army has moved Scorpion tanks and Saracen personnel carriers into Heathrow airport.

We have seen what happened when the tanks moved in on civilian populations in Greece, Czechoslovakia and Chile but we still believed it would never happen in Britain, even though the effects of the army moving into Ulster are plain for all to see.

Scotland Yard assures that this is part of contingency plans that have been prepared to

deal with emergencies'. However it is they who decide what constitutes an emergency. How long will it be before a strike becomes defined as such an emergency and the military is called in to deal with workers on picket lines?

Ulster is at present the battle field of the British army; they are now trying to widen their activities to the rest of the British Isles. This is an attempt by the ruling class to condition the minds of the working class to accept military intervention in their daily lives.

We must fight for the removal of military forces from all parts of Britain before it is too late.



# EUROPE - 1 YEAR AFTER

Britain has been in the Common Market for just over one year, but the depth of the continuing crisis in the capitalist system has made commentators wonder if the market will survive.

West Germany insists on a common policy on oil and Britain on the full payment on the regional fund - 5 times as much as Germany wants to accept. Conflicts of national interests are inevitable when the whole framework is developing away from the nation state. The current crisis makes these conflicts more acute and is slowing down structural integration. The plan to start pooling gold and foreign exchange reserves has collapsed because the major reserve holders are terrified that they'll need reserves themselves. The newly floating franc joins the floating pound and lire in their sabotage of the mark. Thus progress towards economic integration has been minimal.

The EEC has not had the effects on the British economy that the bosses hoped for. British shipbuilding is the industry that has obviously been sacrificed. Output remains stagnant at 1.2 million tons a year, when potential capacity is 1.75 - 2 million. Realisation of this potential capacity would have to be through the ruthless productivity agreements that happen in W. Germany, Scandinavia and Japan. It is these that give them the edge over their British competitors.

The steel industry is gaining from entry though. Common Market rules have allowed price increases of 21% in the last nine months. The EEC is also subsidising rationalisation of British steel. It is contributing £7 million to handouts which are intended to make at least 50,000 steel workers redundant in 10 years.

The motor industry was supposed to benefit from entry into a slack Continental market. However European firms are selling 42% more cars in Britain than a year ago and 10% more than they were in Sept-

ember. And British firms are not having the same impact in Europe.

The best hope for the motor bosses seems to be in following Lucas' example and building components for European firms. They are attempting to solve the crisis by building new plants in areas of cheap labour. British Leyland is expanding production in Milan, Belgium and Spain, while Dunlop is starting to lose its national characteristics by its link up with Pirelli and plants in France and Germany.

Electrical engineering is getting closer to the wall, due to its inability to expand into Continental markets while European firms were attacking the British market. The Thom-Elcon merger showed how a British firm had to join up with a foreign one in order to sell tele-communications goods in Britain.

Relaxation of rules for bank takeovers has meant that this area has become a mass of international co-operations. The dangers for British banking with the link-ups taking place, e.g. between Paribas and S.G. Warburg, is that this increasing centralisation will change its role as one of the leaders in the rest of the world.

The EEC has had more success with agreements in the basic legal framework on industrial, social and environmental policies. These are the least damaging to national interests, the least threatened in its transition to a new phase of capital. This makes development in this area even more crucial. There has to be a common legal framework for the EEC: a common apparatus underpinning the operations of capital within Europe, making for maximum profit and security of investment. It is at this level that the EEC is taking over the function of the nation state.

The oil crisis has placed a fresh strain on the relations within Europe, as well as between Europe and USA. But the protracted crisis in the world economy means an Atlantic character truce between the



two looks like emerging that will include Japan and Canada.

This emergence of bloc means that the Mediterranean policy of building a free trade area has fallen behind. However trade pacts with EFTA have been regularised and pacts completed with India and Brazil.

## LOUSY STANDARD OF LIVING

British capitalism has not gained from entry the way it expected to. What has mostly been seen is the collapse of old industries and the growth of some new ones. However it remains true that British bosses still need Europe in order to be able to survive as a class. Their survival will be paid for out of our pockets. Phase Three and the four-day week etc can no longer be taken in the context of Britain alone. It is no longer just a question of getting the money to invest. Bosses now have to become competitive with countries with more docile work forces. We are being offered a straight choice: Accept a lousy standard of living or see our jobs given to the oppressed Spanish workers or the starving Italians.

The only way forward for workers is an international one. Our futures are tied together. We can't break that. Nor, so long as we accept the bosses' right to decide our futures can we reject the choice between slashed incomes and unemployment. By building links through Europe across international combines at first, we can pose an alternative to capitalism - as long as the power remains on the shopfloor. 1973 was the year when British bosses made record profits and our living standards fell more drastically than any year since the war. Without conscious attempts to combat this, 1974 will be worse.

NUPE MEMBER

## Publications

Organisational Platform of the Libertarian Communists. (ORA pamphlet) advance orders to D. Young, 91, Burghhead Drive, Linthouse, Glasgow.

Mole Express Manchester voice of revolutionary struggle. News, reviews, exposes, graphics/features. 10p monthly from 7, Summer Terrace, Manchester M4 5WD.

Portugal Libertario, le divulga PORTUGAL (Organismo Revolucionaria Anarquista) 15 pence. Para das informacoes escreve a 68 Chingford Rd, London E. 17. Nonsen temen as suas artigos, sugestoes ou informacoes.

Front Libertaire fortnightly paper of O.R.A. France. Sample copy from North London group, subscription details from 33, rue des Vignoles, 75020 Paris, France.

De Vrije Socialist paper of the Dutch Libertarian Socialist Federation. For copies write to, Jan Bervoets, willems de zwijgerlaan 104, Den Haag, Netherlands.

Inside Story the radical magazine which specialises in the stories Fleet St. won't print. For sample copy send 25p to Dept. AP 20, 3, Belmont Road, London S.W. 4.

Solidarity, a paper for militants in industry and elsewhere. 6p, plus post from 123, Latham Road, London, E.6.

Street Research for practical, grass roots research. Issue No. 2 on researching an individual, No. 3 on researching local authorities and the legal system. 15p per copy plus postage to S.R.B., 86 Ralston Rd, London S.E. 24.

FOR INFORMATION ON ORA  
WRITE TO

**24 Moss St,  
York.**

ARTICLES, SUBS, ORDERS FOR  
LIBERTARIAN STRUGGLE TO BE SENT TO

**29 Cardigan  
Rd, Leeds 6.**

PUBLIC MEETINGS AND EVENTS

GLASGOW ORA  
MEET WEDNESDAYS, 8.00pm  
JONA COMMUNITY, 114, CLYDE ST.

N. LONDON ORA  
LIBERTARIAN STRUGGLE DISCUSSION  
GROUPS, CONTACT GROUP SECRETARY.  
(SEE PAGE 3)

LEEDS ORA  
DISCUSSION MEETINGS, CONTACT GROUP  
SECRETARY (SEE PAGE 3)

## 5 DAYS PAY

Moves by employers to suspend overtime agreements for Saturday working during the 3-day week are being strongly resisted by groups of workers all over the country. Attempts by Midlands bosses to 'mutually' suspend overtime payments are receiving a hostile reception from workers at their factories.

Pleading that the need to pay overtime will bankrupt them, some firms have ignored the mutual aspect and are already refusing to pay overtime. Workers must not be deceived into accepting these excuses. When firms plead poverty, it means that it might affect profits. At the present time it is a direct fight between a cut in profits or a cut in wages. The margin of affluence exists no longer. In this situation the response of the Lancashire millworkers to ban Saturday working is the right step forward. Action has to be stronger than merely lodging protests with the local employers association which was the response of the Coventry Shipbuilding & Engineering unions.

Employers, mainly in the engineering industry, have had to give way to demands for overtime pay for emergency Saturday work. In the textile industry, however, - an industry not previously noted for militancy of late - the workers in the National Union of Dyers, Bleachers and Textile workers have refused to do emergency work until they are assured of full overtime pay for Saturday shifts. Until this happens, the millworkers will ban all overtime, shift systems and work study schemes when the industry returns to normal working.

In this situation demands should be made for 5 days work or 5 days pay. The working class can only hope to avoid wagecutting on a mass scale by making the bosses pay for the crisis.

Published by ORA, from 29, Cardigan Rd., Leeds 6. Printed by Ayrway Litho, 218 Brimsford Rd., London S.W.11. SAQ Tel 01-274 8483.